

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Bobbie Rankin: still a missionary despite her "title"

By Marty Croll

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Crossing an ocean does not a missionary make.

Nor does coming back from the other side mean a missionary stops being one.

From the time high school-age Bobbie Rankin voiced her dream of being a missionary teacher during a beauty pageant, she says God has shown her how his missionary plan weaves itself through her life — whatever her title.

Just months ago, she took on a new title, though unofficial: wife of the president of the Foreign Mission Board. She acquired it when Jerry Rankin, her husband of 27 years, was elected FMB president June 14.

Still, she's no less a missionary now than she's ever been. "I definitely do have a call on my life, and that call hasn't been revoked," she said.

In 1982, when the Rankins took a mission assignment in Thailand, they left Indonesia after 12 years. Since they went to Indonesia expecting to retire from there, she felt a great loss at being separated from the work that had become so much a part of her.

But God showed her then that — even with new responsibilities — she would always have a role in Indonesia as a missionary who could pray intelligently about needs there.

"I feel God has equipped us by helping us to see the world and putting it on our hearts," she said. "One of my main roles will be to become informed about all our missionaries so I can pray for them and encourage other people to pray."

The Rankins are buying a house less than a block from the

Foreign Mission Board's main building. They sought a home with an open floor plan to allow them to entertain guests from around the world. Throughout their missionary career, hospitality has been one of her loves.

But her ministry has never stopped there. On the mission field, she also helped start churches, led Bible studies for Muslim women, taught seminary extension and English classes, and led in student work.

In fact, she found the missionary wife role particularly liberating. "The title 'church and home' missionary... is not an excuse to be uninvolved with people overseas," she said.

"When I first arrived on the mission field, I was challenged by missionary homemakers whom I considered role models. I saw what fruitful ministries they had even though they would not ever be called, quote, 'professionals.'"

Her views about women and the role of wives seem to fly in the face of modern-day theory. But they have worked in her family to provide the backbone for a fruitful missionary partnership and to rear two children who have gone on to their own productive lives.

"A woman is naturally a nurturer of relationships," said Rankin.

"I see this as one of our strongest resources on the mission field, that our women have such strong relational skills. Women have such needs of relationships.... It's one of her greatest assets, because she becomes a relational lifestyle minister."

Like her husband, the former **Bobbie Ann Simmons of Brook-**

haven, grew up in a family with faith. Born the second child to educator parents — a high school principal father and teacher mother — she said there was never any question about her attending college.

In high school, where she graduated as valedictorian, she excelled at everything from basketball to Future Homemakers of America (FHA) — and even was picked as a national FHA committee member representing Mississippi. Encouraged by her father, she concentrated on public speaking, at first in church prayer meetings, and training union.

As a freshman at Mississippi College, she became active in the Baptist Student Union and made her debut in student government with her election as freshman dorm president.

Before graduating a semester early with distinction, she was secretary of the Women's Affairs Board, counselor for two years to the freshman dorm, and a BSU summer missionary in Hawaii.

She also won contests for Miss Mississippi College and Homecoming Queen.

And she won the heart of Jerry Rankin.

She remembers as a freshman the day they were introduced on the steps of the library. He didn't ask her out until the next year. That's when her roommate's fiancé told Jerry at lunch one day that — even though everyone thought she was serious about another boy — in fact she would like to be considered available.

The way he tells it, he left his unfinished lunch right there and went to call her. They married about two years later, the same

month she graduated, and they set out on a path which led to the mission field.

Nearly seven years later, more than two years into their missionary career, they got word her father had been killed in an auto accident. It culminated months of

other heartaches and struggles that would have sent some fleeing from the field.

But they never considered it. And even now, without the title, Bobbie Rankin is still a missionary.

Croll writes for FMB.



Bobbie Rankin

Bible-based gambling?

Lottery officials in Georgia recently boasted that one of their winners used the Bible to help her win the jackpot. The Georgia Council on Moral and Civic Concerns, which is allied with the Baptist Convention of Georgia, reported that lottery officials in a press release said the unidentified winner "had been using birthdays to pick her weekly numbers. Then she tried a different approach—the Book of Psalms in the Bible, recording the chapters and verses once she had finished reading. Last Saturday night, her Bible verse numbers matched the six numbers drawn for Lotto Georgia." The winner was quoted as saying, "I went to the Holy Bible and I hit it.... I guess the Bible is the best thing to go to." The Council replied, "For the Bible to be used as a soothsayer is bad enough. But that the lottery bureaucracy would place the stamp of approval of the state government itself on such a sacrilegious use of the Word of God by using it to promote its gambling is appalling."

That's show biz

Anne B. Davis, best known for her role as Alice the housekeeper on television's "The Brady Bunch," credits God for giving her the confidence she needed to succeed as an actress. "Lots of actors need constant affirmation," she told **Charisma** magazine. "When I found out that God loved me, I didn't care whether the rest of the world did or not," she said. Davis lives near a seminary outside Pittsburgh, where she attends classes in Old Testament and church history.

Three months of traveling the world with a small backpack gave Christian musician Ian Eskelin an increased awareness of the importance of missions, according to an article in **CCM** magazine. The Code of Ethics band member said, "There are places in the world where they have never heard the name Jesus Christ. They can't comprehend it really. And it kind of blows their mind. And it kind of blows my mind that they have never heard of Jesus before."

Looking Back...

10 years ago

Lauderdale Association forms Mississippi's first ACTS board, which will govern 23 hours each week of national and local Southern Baptist programming telecast over Meridian's cable system.

20 years ago

Construction on a new pastorium at Mt. Nebo Church in Newton County is put on hold while the church makes plans to rebuild portions of the church destroyed several nights ago by a fire of undetermined origin.

50 years ago

A **Baptist Record** editorial points out that Georgia and Arizona have joined the states purchasing buildings for denominational headquarters. "We do not covet their buildings but we do covet one for Mississippi," it admonishes.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The church and change

Should the church's style of worship, traditions, and policies remain constant or change with the times?

The world is in an upheaval of change. What should be the response of the church, asks Jere Allen, a Mississippian now executive director of Baptists in Washington, D.C. Are we placing new wine in old wineskins?

Rick Warren, pastor in California, declares his church intentionally works to meet the needs, tastes, and intents of the baby boomers. This calls for multiple options, small groups, worship services with contemporary music, casual/informal atmosphere, and a hands-on ministry.

Bill Hybels, pastor of Willow Creek Church near Chicago, programs and preaches to "unchurched Harry," and the morning worship service is a "seekers' service" containing drama, contemporary music, art, and a sermon with limited religious terminology.

Meanwhile, in Atlanta the Country Music Church opened last fall and the Nashville sound fascinates the unchurched. Their intention is to reach that part of society which enjoys country

music. Where is Beethoven when we need him?

Nelson Wilson, editor of *Herald of Holiness*, chimes in with "This is not your father's church," with a tip of his hat to Oldsmobile.

Staid traditionalists may not feel comfortable behind the wheel nor in the pew. Stash the hymnbooks, we use choruses. Visitors appear comfortable, long-time members do not. Ministry reportedly has married marketing, and this is the monstrous offspring.

Perpetuating the sacred cows of non-biblical tradition has hindered the programs of some churches. Terminology is changing as the pastor is now the CEO and administrator. He is now the manager rather than the minister; the rancher, not the shepherd, and regardless of age is listed as the "senior pastor."

Wilson wants to know if we are called to separation from society or to saturation of society. He does admit that historically, attempts to win the world by compromise rather than contrast have resulted in diluting and polluting the church.

Church 101 is in session and

doctrines may not be in the curriculum. The baby boomers now number up to one-third of the total population. The boomers want their needs to be met. They want to participate, but hate to join. They are busy and everything is to be microwaveable.

They like the fast-food window and the one-hour dry cleaning. They are children-conscious, health-conscious, and crave communication through music. They respond financially when needs are met and recognize the qualities of leadership in women. Barna Research points out that they are generous, "... although they give their money based on different criteria."

What is First Church, County Seat, or Mt. Nebo Church apt to do in light of such change? Surely innovation has its limits. Other Christians must be heard, and not all tradition is evil. The Madison Avenue "user-friendly" marketing techniques can result in members, but not commitment, a phenomenon which Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace."

Change must be considered, but even more, the purpose of the church must be remembered.

Guest Opinion...

Identity crisis in the church

By Tom Adams

Several books dealing with the Southern Baptist Convention controversy have been published in recent months. These are interesting, and each contributes to the understanding of this juncture in our history. Yet virtually all of them are subjective in their interpretations of issues, events, and personalities. The authors invariably reflect their particular biases rather than detached objective accounts.

A notable exception just off the press is *Identity Crisis in the Church: The Southern Baptist Convention Controversy* by H. Franklin Paschall.

Paschall's credentials as preacher, scholar, denominational leader, and Christian gentleman are beyond question. He was pastor of First Church, Nashville, for almost 30 years, and president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) for two terms.

My personal friendship and admiration of this noble servant of the Lord go back many years. I was a college student in western Kentucky, pastoring a small rural church while he was a doctoral

student at Southern Seminary. I'll never forget the revival he preached at our church and his soul-winning fervor.

Paschall's book does not favor any particular "side." In fact, he made the decision in 1979 not to identify with any group even though he was and is a theological conservative. He came to this stance because he sensed that a political approach was being followed by the leadership of both moderates and conservatives. It was his conviction that, however lofty and divine the objectives may be, political strategy and activities reap political and secular results. This he considered a scriptural conflict since our ministry as Christians and Baptists is spiritual rather than carnal.

Actually, Paschall does not chronicle a history of the conflict. Only two of the 12 chapters deal specifically with it. The bulk of the book is a magnificent commentary on the nature of the church. It is Paschall's conviction that the present SBC controversy is directly related to and, to a considerable degree stems from, a

lack of knowledge and adherence to our ecclesiology as Baptists. He believes that fuzzy, loose, and nebulous thinking on this subject is tragically dividing and diminishing Southern Baptists as a people and a spiritual force. While he doesn't think the controversy caused this "identity crisis" in the church, it is his opinion that it has brought it into sharper focus and that it is time for a fresh study of our ecclesiology and a return to our roots.

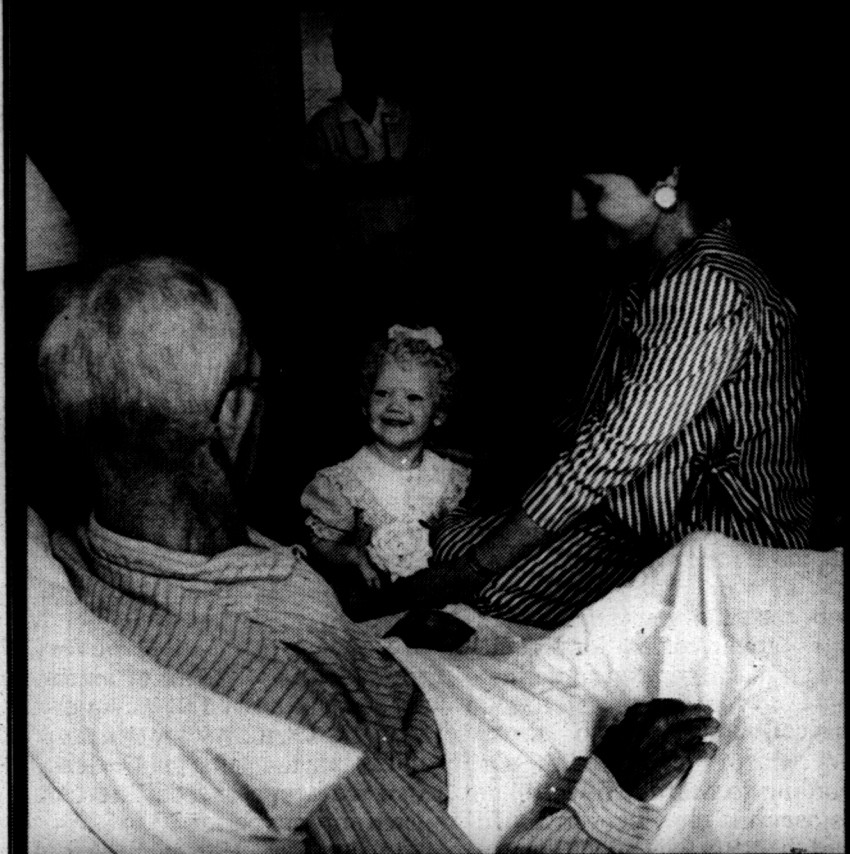
One can feel the pathos in the author's heart and sense his prophetic voice as he writes in the last paragraph of his book: "If we persist in a divided house and broken fellowship, history will judge us harshly and God, more harshly. God could leave us in a splintered condition of solitariness and solitude, weak and whimpering."

(The book can be ordered from Gospel Progress, Inc., 2438 Bear Road, Nashville, TN 37215. Cost is \$12, which includes postage.)

Adams writes for *THE ILLINOIS BAPTIST*.

'I am fearfully and wonderfully made'

Psalm 139:14



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THE FRAGMENTS



Can God be voted on?

Increasingly I grow uncomfortable hearing some of the expressions being used about God and the public schools. Words like "since we told God to leave," or "kicked God out of the schools," or "shut God out," or "took God out." The meaning is clear, but the theology is awry.

God is sovereign, omnipotent, and Lord of all. The God we serve cannot be "kicked out" of anything he desires to be in. He cannot be voted out. The majority may rule in some organizations, but not in the kingdom of God. Even Sodom and Gomorrah could not drive out the angel of the Lord until he was ready to leave.

He was rejected by the Nazareth synagogue, but Jesus left

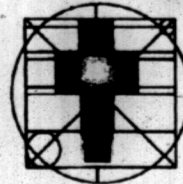
when he was ready. Jesus commanded his followers to "go, make disciples... and lo, I am with you..." everywhere except in the public schools. In Romans 1, the Bible speaks of wicked people who "did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind...." Man proposes, God disposes.

How can God be out of the schools if his children are there? No locks, walls, nor guards can stop him. Just ask the guard of the Jerusalem jail where Peter and the angel walked out untouched.

God comes when he decides to go. He goes when he desires to go. He cannot be removed nor given permission to enter by the courts of the land. — GH

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BAPTIST
MEN'S DAY



Missions Involvement Through Serving in Christ's Spirit

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Declining income leads to HMB hiring freeze, study

ATLANTA (BP) — Decreased gifts to the Home Mission Board from its two major income sources in 1993 caused the agency to implement a temporary hiring freeze and conduct an internal study which may lead to "minimal" downsizing.

According to unaudited figures, the 1993 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering totaled \$36.3 million, compared to \$37.6 million the previous year — a 3.5% decrease. Cooperative Program receipts at the HMB were

\$676,000 less than the projected budget for the year.

The special Easter offering comprises 47% of the mission board's income, while the Cooperative Program accounts for another 35%.

Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president, said although the special offering decrease is disappointing, it is not a surprise.

"The 1992 Easter Offering was a record, nearly a 7% increase over the previous year. In these uncertain financial

times, we knew it would be difficult to maintain that kind of increase, so we budgeted for an offering of \$36 million." The final total is 1% over the budgeted amount and thus, according to Lewis, will not immediately impact work on the mission field.

"However, we are concerned about potential budget shortfalls from all income sources for this year and next, 1994 and '95. In fact, I have asked our management staff to study our organization with the possibility of some

minimal downsizing toward the end of this year or next," Lewis explained.

Lewis said he has implemented a hiring freeze at the agency for the first three months of the year, anticipating the internal study to be complete by spring.

"This action should not be seen as an extreme measure. We are simply not filling vacant positions in Atlanta until we have a better feeling for 1995 income projections. It's simply prudent management," he said.

A number of SBC entities implemented staff reductions and reorganizations last year including the Sunday School and Foreign Mission boards, the Stewardship Commission, and several state conventions.

Lewis called on Southern Baptists to renew their support of both the special missions offering and the Cooperative Program. "We cannot meet ever-increasing spiritual needs across our country with ever-decreasing resources."

SBC CP gifts up for month, year-to-date

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for December were up 14.56% over the same month a year ago which also helped the first quarter of the fiscal year to show an increase, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

The CP gifts for December 1993 totaled \$12,495,334 compared to December 1992 of

\$10,906,778, or a 14.56% increase. The year-to-date figure, the first quarter of the 1993-94 fiscal year, shows \$34,367,885 compared to the same period of 1992-93 of \$33,471,798, a 2.68% increase.

Designated gifts for December also were up, \$3,162,701 compared to last year of \$3,088,574, a 2.4% increase. However, year-to-date designated gifts total \$6,458,758 compared to \$7,573,443 in the previous fiscal year, a 14.72% decrease.

State gifts to CP are up, '93 budget still fell short

Mississippi Baptists gave just over \$2 million in December to make a total for 1993 Cooperative Program giving of \$21,654,659, according to Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

December giving totaled \$2,082,678, which was \$115,436 less than that given in December of 1992.

Total 1993 giving was up over that given in 1992 by \$320,271 (or

1.50%). However, 1993 giving did not meet the budget set a year earlier at \$22,452,000 by messengers to the Mississippi Baptist Convention. The budget was short by \$797,341 (or 3.55%).

Earlier this year, convention officials noted a likely shortfall and began cutting back expenditures proportionately. Also, convention messengers voted an exact duplicate of the 1993 budget for 1994.

Federal government OKs first fetal-tissue research

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The federal government has awarded a \$4.5 million grant to study the use of cells from aborted fetuses as a treatment for Parkinson's disease.

The grant is the first since President Clinton lifted a five-year-old ban on federal funding for fetal-tissue research.

The grant funds a program at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and other study sites to determine the effects of implanting fetal tissue into the brains of Parkinson's patients.

Parkinson's is a progressive brain disorder affecting about 500,000 Americans, most over 60. It causes tremors, an inability to walk and difficulty in speaking. The disease is caused by the gradual loss of nerve cells which produce dopamine, a chemical which aids brain communication.

Currently Parkinson's is treated with drugs such as L-dopa, which provide substantial relief

for most patients but tend to lose their effectiveness over years of use.

Scientists believe fetal implants will replace dopamine-producing cells, restoring more normal movement and providing better response to drug treatments.

Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush prohibited federal funding of research with fetal tissue from elective abortions. In one of his first official acts as president, Clinton lifted the ban.

The Southern Baptist Convention has gone on record in annual meetings as opposing fetal-tissue research. In a resolution adopted at last June's convention in Houston, SBC messengers stated they "remain morally opposed to the use of electively aborted fetal tissue in all experiments conducted by the federal government and urge President Clinton to reconsider his decision to advance such reprehensible research."

The Baptist Record

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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1994 Evangelism Conference set for First Church, Jackson



Aultman



Bennett



Buchanan

Street Church, Marietta, Ga. Tippit is an international evangelist

The Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference kicks off at 1:30 p.m., Jan. 24, at First Church, Jackson. Theme will be "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me," from Acts 1:8.

J. Garland McKee, evangelism director for the convention board and conference organizer, said that two of the highlights of the meeting will be the preaching of Sammy Tippit and Nelson Price. Price, who will be the closing speaker on Tuesday evening, Jan. 25, is pastor of Roswell



Dunn



Hooten



Tippit

who works in personal evangelism for the Home Mission Board; Ron

based in San Antonio who spends 80% of his ministry in other countries.

Other speakers include Howard Aultman, whom McKee called the Dean of Mississippi vocational evangelists, and who will be the opening speaker on Monday afternoon; Steve Bennett, pastor of Colonial Hills Church, Southaven, which had the most baptisms in the state last year, 152; Ron Dunn, an international evangelist based in Irving, Texas;

Thad Hamilton, who works in personal evangelism for the Home Mission Board; Ron



Passmore



Price



Herrod

Singing Churchmen; and other choirs and musicians.

Herrod, pastor of Central Church, Oak Ridge, Tenn.; Jim Hooten, associate director of the Volunteers in Missions Department at the Foreign Mission Board, and a 27-year missionary veteran; and Jerry Passmore, evangelism director for the Florida Baptist Convention.

Music guests will be Graham Smith, director of the Church Music Department, MBCB, who will be music director of the conference; Greg Buchanan, harpist from Leawood, Kan.; the Mississippi

Writer's AIDS story yields friendship

By Tim Nicholas

A young Baptist woman who is HIV positive has shared her life story and her tears with a writer who decided the story didn't have to end with the assignment.

Stuart Calvert of Ashland was assigned to write a series for the Woman's Missionary Union magazine Royal Service on various lifestyles. The article for the January 1994 issue was to be about a woman infected with AIDS.

Calvert found Ann in St. Louis and after the interviews were completed and the story written, she couldn't let the friendship end.

Ann told Calvert of her tears — of losing friends to AIDS and to fear of AIDS. And she passed

some of the tears along to Calvert. "She gave me tears, oh yes," Calvert said. Even when she first began talking with Ann over the phone, "her hesitancy made me cry because I thought I might represent people trying to exploit her."

Calvert convinced Ann of her sincerity in wanting to explain Ann's situation so readers could compassionately understand the problem.

Ann explained that since she contracted the virus, she has become more slow to trust. "What clicked in me for Stuart was when she called me one day ... just called to see if I was OK. Even if I decided not to go on with the

story, it didn't make any difference to her, she still wanted to be my friend." Ann added, "She really does care about me."

Ann's story itself is gripping. Adopted as a small child, Ann was emotionally and physically abused by her adoptive father. As an adult, she was a victim of a gang rape. Rescued by neighbors, she contracted the virus called HIV from the rape.

She lost her fiancé who said her lack of faith kept God from healing her body. He later apologized for what he said but it was too late for Calvert to put in her article — and too late for him to take it back.

(See WRITER on page 8)



Walters at Mary Mahoney's restaurant on the Coast anticipated the arrival of the BSU's Christmas Eve banquet attendees. The "Not Another Banquet" raised over \$7,500 for summer missions by asking participants to pay not to come.

Gulf Coast BSU banquet was big hit — no one came

By Tim Nicholas

"Nobody came and nobody was disappointed," said Tim Thomas, organizer of a Christmas Eve banquet which raised approximately \$7,500 for Mississippi Baptist student summer missions.

The "Not Another Banquet" banquet was sponsored by the Baptist Student Union of Gulf Coast Community College. If anyone had come, it would have started at 7 p.m. on Dec. 24, said Thomas, BSU director for the school.

The banquet would have taken place at Mary Mahoney's, a restaurant which catered to President Reagan on the White House lawn. "We were glad not to host the banquet," said owner Bobby Mahoney. "We're just sorry everyone missed our Lobster Georgio."

Two noted individuals paid not to entertain. Mississippi author John Grisham, whose novel *The Pelican Brief* is a current hit movie, paid "significantly," not to come, said Thomas.

And concert pianist Philip Fortenberry paid not to play. Fortenberry, who performed twice

for President and Mrs. Bush — once when the Gorbachevs were visiting — is presently director and a performer with the touring company of the Broadway hit, "Cats." He is a former member of the William Carey College musical group, Carpenter's Wood.

Nancy Pasternack, reporter for coast television station WLOX, paid not to emcee the event. Former First Lady Rosalyn Carter paid not to attend.

The banquet, designed not to interfere with other Christmas events, attracted 118 participants who paid good money to stay away. Tickets were \$10, but some paid more. One attorney sent \$100, saying he really didn't want to come.

"Certainly there were no complaints about the amount or quality of food and there were no problems with scheduling," said Thomas. "In fact, no one complained about anything."

Said Thomas, "It was an idea whose time never came."

Nicholas is director, Office of Communication, MBCB.

Va. moderate-conservative panel studies cooperation

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The president of the Baptist General Association of Virginia has created a committee he hopes will help Virginia Baptists with varying theological viewpoints work together in cooperative ministries.

Co-chairing the council will be two well-known Virginia pastors: moderate Neal Jones of Columbia Church in Falls Church and conservative Tommy Taylor of London Bridge Church in Virginia Beach.

Virginia conservatives say they feel excluded and are wary of

what they call a loosening of ties between the BGAV and the SBC. Last January they formed Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia as a vehicle to voice their concerns.

As the BGAV has opened its budgeting process to permit churches to give to causes other than those sponsored by the SBC, some conservative churches have decreased their contributions to Virginia Baptist ministries, sending money directly to the SBC Executive Committee, which distributes funds to SBC causes.

Progress report —

Churches and staff helping to bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus

The statement above has been adopted as the goal of Mississippi Baptists. What are we doing to justify such lofty idealism? December and early January may not be the best time to study the record in view of church growth, but progress is being made.

The parade of volunteers to do construction work, Bible classes, or medical work in Honduras continues with unabated interest.

Cross-cultural meetings in Jones and Lauderdale associations will assist African-Americans to have evangelistic and equipped churches.

One team at the Baptist Building seeks to provide Bible study groups for every Mississippian.

A new conversational English study with international students is being led by the BSU at Mississippi State University. A BSU group at the University of Southern Mississippi is leading in a Bible study effort for nurses in the Hattiesburg area. Prayer is the main emphasis of a group at Itawamba Community College BSU.

The Equipping Team at the Baptist Building seeks to develop models and strategies for equipping every church member to discover and commit his or her spiritual gifts for service.

So, how are they doing? MasterLife continues to pay huge dividends in churches and colleges.

Two groups recently began on the campus of Jones County Junior College.

Senior adults are interested in being part of the Lay Involvement for Transforming the church (LIFT) teams; retired preachers and singers are being used in revivals for senior adults. Prayer ministries and spiritual awakening conferences are becoming major items in many churches.

Nationally, the "True Love Waits" sexual abstinence campaign is progressing even to other denomination and countries. Jackson television stations, ABC, and newspapers have picked up on its coverage. The recent Youth Evangelism Conference included the display of signed sexual purity commitment cards. Canada and several African nations have also picked up on the plan.

The Baptist Building also sponsors a Witness Team to develop strategies in evangelism and missions, which will result in churches providing an authentic witness to every person in their communities.

Prison ministries at Parchman and Leakesville have evangelism and discipleship programs, not only for prisoners but for staff personnel. Charles Jones, chaplain at Parchman, says a "caring attitude is more important than mere words." A prisoner in one prison

unit cried out, "When will someone come over and help us?"

A literacy department at the Baptist Building provides equipment for using biblical materials in English conversation training. The Baptist Student Unions, now on 34 Mississippi campuses, have an outreach to 100,000 students.

First Church, Morton, has a missionary outreach to Mexicans working the chicken industry in Scott County.

Can you imagine a rural church with a baptism ratio of one baptism for every nine resident members? Consider Harmony Church, Copiah County, where Clark Stewart, pastor. The church has 472 resident members; in its revival meeting Sunday, 354 were in Sunday School and 209 in Discipleship Training. The church baptized 124 in 1993 and ranks among the top churches in the state in baptisms.

This is only a thumbnail sketch of the work being done in our state. It is made possible by the cooperation of 1,890 churches in 74 associations. Together we gave \$21,654,659 last year through the Cooperative Program to "speed them on their way" in winning Mississippi and world to Jesus.

LIFT teams are available to help churches analyze and discover strategies for reaching their areas with the gospel. — GH

Pastor regrets polarization over challenge of church's woman pastor

FRESNO, Calif. (BP) — The pastor who initiated a successful challenge against seating messengers from a church with a woman pastor at the November California Southern Baptist Convention meeting says he was stunned by the outcome.

"I thought the thing was (ruled) out of order," said Dan Nelson, pastor of First Church in Camarillo. "I was sort of stunned that the discussion continued."

The convention voted 213-204 not to seat messengers from 19th Avenue Church in San Francisco Nov. 16 because the church's pastor is a woman. Nelson said the action confirmed his belief most Southern Baptists are opposed to women pastors.

Nelson said he thought the matter was settled when the convention's credentials committee ruled the challenge invalid. He was surprised by the subsequent action overruling the committee and convention parliamentarians.

"I regret all the controversy," Nelson said. "I wish someone else would have made the motion" challenging 19th Avenue's messengers.

"I have no viciousness toward that church or its pastor," Nelson said. And though admitting he has never met or talked with Julie Pennington-Russell, the church's pastor, he said he "would be glad to sit down and dialogue" with her or

anyone else.

Nelson said he was "surprised at the reaction of denominational workers" to the successful challenge. He cited the motion by Karl Ortis, director of missions for San Francisco Peninsula Association, which includes 19th Avenue.

Before surrendering his own credentials as a messenger, Ortis offered a motion calling for the convention to refund missions gifts which 19th Avenue Church had given during the past year. The motion was referred to the CSBC executive board for action.

"It's a hard issue," Nelson said. "The answer would be to have more dialogue. I see it as a stand for biblical principles, not a witch hunt. I don't have an agenda."

Registration opened Jan. 1 for National Acteens Convention

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Registration opened Jan. 1 for the National Acteens Convention to be held in Birmingham, Ala., June 21-24.

NAC is held once every five years for Acteens members, grades seven through 12, and their leaders. This is the first time the convention has been held in Birmingham, site of the WMU national office. More than 16,000 teens and their leaders are expected to attend NAC.

Registration will continue until June 3 on a first-come, first-served basis. Only those who register in advance will be allowed to participate in NAC activities.

A registration fee of \$60 per person must accompany all registration forms. The fee includes entrance to all NAC sessions, a registration packet, and an official NAC T-shirt. The fee does not include travel, housing, meals, insurance, nor incidentals.

Bivocational pastors set goals, hear challenge from Mohler

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Bivocational ministers from across the Southern Baptist Convention set a goal of starting 300 new congregations in 1994, affirmed the denomination's 1995 evangelism emphasis, honored five of their own for outstanding ministry, and heard a challenge from the new president of Southern Seminary during Dec. 9-11 meetings.

Southern Baptists should re-emphasize the New Testament teaching that every believer is a minister and move away from seeing ministry as something done only by professionals, Al Mohler, president of Southern Seminary, said in his address to the Bivocational Ministers' Association.

Mohler told the bivocational ministers a return to New Testa-

ment teachings about the nature of ministry would help Southern Baptists "transcend a good many of the controversies in our denomination."

The national council adopted two goals this year:

1) For churches served by bivocational pastors to establish 300 new missions or churches in 1994.

2) To encourage all bivocational churches to participate in "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now," the SBC's simultaneous evangelism effort planned for 1995.

The council also reaffirmed four previously stated goals related to connecting bivocational ministers to bivocational opportunities, developing resources for bivocational ministers, and strengthening the lives and fellowship of bivoca-

tional ministers.

Officers elected by the council include Charles Stewart, pastor of Rose Hill Missionary Baptist Church, Ashland, Ky., president; Mike Dennis, Missouri Baptist Convention staff member, vice president and program chairman; Ray Hayes, bivocational supply preacher from Fisherville, Ky., assistant newsletter editor.

Officers elected by the association, which is the larger group, include Bob Ray, pastor of Fairy Church, Hico, Texas, president; Ron Ward, pastor of Mount Tabor Church, Lorris, S.C., vice president; John Hall, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Grand Ridge, Fla., second vice president; Jimmy McCaleb, minister of music at Daystar Church, Florence, treasurer.

Pastors are making baptism more celebration, less ritual

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)—A young woman told pastor Mike Haynes after several youths had been baptized at First Church, North Kansas City, Mo., she wanted to stand up with her fists in the air and yell, "Yeah!" When Haynes asked why she didn't, she smiled and admitted she didn't want others to think she was crazy.

Haynes instructed her to stand up and yell next time.

"There is never a more appropriate time to cheer and scream and make a fool of ourselves than when someone lets the world know they love Jesus and are sold out to him by their baptism," Haynes wrote in the church newsletter the following week.

The ordinance of baptism sometimes is viewed more as a ritual than a celebration, several Missouri Baptist pastors agreed. But they acknowledged many Baptist churches are highlighting baptism in more celebrative ways to remind congregations of its significance.

"Baptism is what we are all about. It is not just part of our ministry. This is what we are," Haynes said.

Dave Bennett, director of evangelism for the Missouri Baptist Convention, noted baptism is one-third of the Great Commission, "the third we left out."

Churches sometimes consider baptism a disruption to the service, Bennett said. "It is so difficult to get the baptism filled up, and baptism takes so much of our 'valuable' worship time, so we stick it on Sunday nights and save up for three months to do it."

"Baptism should be the first thing every Sunday morning," he said.

Baptist churches traditionally have been fearful of not emphasizing enough that baptism is only a symbol for salvation—that salvation comes from a personal decision of faith. The danger, Rick Lay said, is baptism tends to become an ordinance that has little signifi-

cance to the new Christians and to the congregation.

"We are not wanting to make too much of it, but we've made too little. We have lost that celebration," he explained. "There is a trend to move away from that, but most churches are stuck in the tradition vacuum."

Lay has strived the last few years to make baptism the central part of the service—drawing more attention to those being baptized and celebrating their decision to follow Jesus Christ.

At First Church, Columbia, Mo., pastor Dan Day has both baptism and communion on the first Sunday of the month. The church began doing the Lord's Supper following baptism to make the first communion for the new Christians more special and meaningful, Day said.

Bennett, who occasionally serves in interim pastorates, said he likes to preach on baptism from "the tank," explaining its history, theology, and practical use. He emphasized what an evangelistic tool a baptism service can be.

Bennett added every time he has preached on baptism from the baptism, at least one person has come forward seeking baptism. Because of its public witness, Bennett schedules baptisms according to which Sunday the candidate can have the most friends and family there.

Lay said churches that are more concerned with statistics than with encouraging and celebrating the new decisions represented by baptism miss out on the powerful witness it has.

A church Lay visited near London, England, has the baptism outside because the pastor wanted baptism to be a real public witness.

"It was a marvelous thing. It really impressed me," Lay said. "A public display of one's faith is one of the most powerful things to witness. It is the symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection."

Thursday, January 13, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Mississippi health care trustees

At its annual meeting Dec. 14, the board of trustees of Baptist Memorial Health Care System in Memphis elected Mississippians (left to right) John Keeton Jr. of Grenada, William Preston Jr. of Booneville, and Cameron Dean of Leland to serve on its executive committee. The Baptist Memorial Health Care System is affiliated with the Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi Baptist conventions. One-third of the system's trustees come from each of those states to comprise the 27-member board of trustees. The system is a diversified health care delivery system which currently consists of 24 corporations and 16 hospitals.

ICCM set for April '94 in Richmond, Virginia

"Helping Churches Navigate the Information Highway" is the theme of the second International Conference on Communications Ministries (ICCM) sponsored by the SBC's Radio and Television Commission.

The conference will be April 28-30 in Richmond, Va. at the Holiday Inn, I-64 and West Broad.

"As to why we're sponsoring such conferences for church staff," said Cade Garrison, the RTVC's director of consulting services, "technology is moving at such a rapid rate that if we don't have continuing education we're going

to wake up one day and wonder why no one is paying any attention to us."

Garrison said the intent of the conference is not to try to do away with old and proven methods of communicating the gospel, but to recognize that there is an entire new generation receiving information differently than in the '50s and '60s.

Conference registration is \$100 per person, and Garrison said he anticipates 200 participants.

For additional information write: ICCM, 6350 West Freeway, Fort Worth, Texas, 76150.

N.C. to examine funds channel to Luther Rice, Mid-America seminaries

ASHEBORO, N.C. (BP)—A committee has been named to study a possible funding relationship between the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and Luther Rice Seminary, Lithonia, Ga., and Mid-America Seminary, near Memphis, Tenn.

Kathryn Hambrick, president of the convention's general board, named the committee, following instructions from the convention's annual meeting in November.

The 1994 Baptist state convention budget includes a small item in the optional section for Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, a move which prompted concern by some that other non-Southern Baptist seminaries also be considered for similar funding.

Messengers to the state convention in November asked that a committee be appointed to consid-

er that a line item be included in the regular budget allowing churches to send money to Luther Rice and/or Mid-America and count that money as Cooperative Program gifts. There would be no set dollar amount in the budget for the seminaries. All money would be designated by the churches.

Currently churches may send money through the state convention to three non-Southern Baptist or state convention causes, the Christian Action League of North Carolina, American Bible Society, and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, but may not count this money as Cooperative Program contributions.

The Luther Rice/Mid-America proposal would be similar to these three causes, except such money would be listed as Cooperative Program.

MC, Kyrgyz State Univ. launch historic exchange

After nurturing contacts for three years, Mississippi College now has an international exchange program for students and faculty with Kyrgyz State University in Bishkek, the capital city of the former Soviet Republic of Kyrgyzstan. Bill Nettles, physics and engineering science professor at MC, his wife Alice, and their two children are living in the apartment of the Valery Khardin family in Bishkek. Khardin and his family are living in the Nettles' home while teaching Russian language and culture and Central Asian culture at Mississippi College.

Three MC students, Kelly Breland, Shannon McBurnette, and Basim Nasr, are studying Russian language, Russian and Central

Asian culture and history, and independent study courses at Kyrgyz State University. Their three Kyrgyz counterpart students are studying English, American Literature, European languages, and computer science at Mississippi College.

MC participated in eight weeks of business training in Bishkek through Mississippi International, Inc., an organization supported by the college and based on its campus. MII trained 800 Kyrgyz in the areas of entrepreneurship, banking, and finance, accounting and auditing, business law, and executive management. This training program, as well as the exchange programs, are operated in coordination with Cooperative Services International.

1993 marked with moral compromise, outreach

By Doug Trouten

Military won't don gay apparel

U.S. society's mad rush to legitimize homosexual behavior hit another roadblock in 1993, when President Clinton's promise to end the military's gay ban met with widespread opposition and turned into President Clinton's "compromise" on the gay ban. Under the "compromise" persons in the service can be discharged for revealing or acting on homosexual impulses. This turns out to be pretty similar to the old, pre-Clinton policy, under which persons in the service could be discharged for revealing or acting on homosexual impulses. The difference is that for now, the military won't ask recruits up front if they're gay.

The compromise drew protests

called for sex education to begin at age 2 — perhaps to stem the rising tide of pregnant preschoolers. Elders also urged pro-lifers to "get over their love affair with the fetus," and condemned the Catholic church for being "celibate" and "male-dominated."

Perhaps the most exciting revelation that as head of the Arkansas Health Department, she decided to hush up the news that condoms distributed by her department had unusually high failure rates. This prompted former Education Secretary William Bennett to say he had figured out the Clinton presidency. "The two sacramental objects of this administration, from what I can tell, are taxes and condoms," he said. "They like them all. They like them all the time. They even like them when they don't work."

Other powers that be

Not all of the news from Washington was grim, however. The U.S. Supreme Court dished up a number of decisions that were well received in the Christian community.

On June 7, the Court issued a pair of church-state rulings, holding that public schools may not refuse to rent to groups because of their religious views, and allowing some student-led prayers at public school graduation ceremonies. In the first case, the Court sided with Lamb's Chapel, an evangelical church which wanted to show the Christian film series "Turning Your Heart Toward Home" during the evening at a public school auditorium on Long Island. The Court ruled that religious groups must have the same access to public school property as other groups.

In the other case, the Court let stand a lower-court ruling allowing prayers at public school graduation ceremonies under certain conditions: a majority of students must favor them, a student must offer them, and the prayers must be non-proselytizing and nonsectarian.

The High Court also let stand Mississippi's abortion law, one of the nation's strictest. Without comment, the Court refused to review an appeals court ruling which upheld the law's parental consent and 24-hour waiting period requirements. Since the law went into effect in 1992, the number of abortions in the state had been cut in half.

And as the year drew to a close, the Court rejected an appeal from a 10-year-old Chicago boy who wanted the Boy Scouts of America to drop "duty to God" from the Scout oath. The Court upheld a lower court ruling that the Scouts are a private club, not a place of public accommodation. The boy, who says he is an agnostic, was denied membership in the Scouts because he refused to participate in the Scout oath. While the

Scouts were pleased with the result in the case, they had hoped the Court would hear the case and rule definitely in their behalf, thus ending similar lawsuits they are fighting around the nation.

The Girl Scouts, on the other hand, would apparently rather switch than fight. Meeting in Minneapolis in late October, delegates to the national convention of the Girl Scouts of the USA voted to make the promise to "serve God" optional. Girl Scouts can now promise to serve Allah, Buddha, the Creator, or to serve no one at all.

To Russia with love

While at one time Christian missions work in Russia was a hazardous business that had to be conducted in secret, the fall of communism there opened up tremendous opportunities for the gospel in the former Soviet bloc. In fact, in 1993 it was more unusual to find a Christian group that wasn't tied in with Soviet missions than one that was.

The "Jesus" film is receiving wide circulation in the former republics of the Soviet Union, and an estimated 30 million people will have seen the film in two years. The Jesus Film Project has also placed over 13 million copies of the Gospel of Luke in homes in the former Soviet Union — and, incidentally, has shown the movie to 503 million people in 97 countries, resulting in 33 million decisions for Christ.

Evangelical groups have made such inroads in Russia that the Russian Orthodox Church is reacting defensively, struggling to reestablish its role as the state church. At the urging of the church, the Russian Parliament voted July 14 to amend Russia's "Freedom of Conscience" legislation, imposing heavy restrictions on foreign missions work. Russian President Boris Yeltsin opposed the measure, and returned it to Parliament for revisions. Parliament revised the bill all right — by making it worse. In addition to the ban on foreign missions, the new bill allowed official state support of the Orthodox church, and required registration of all churches. Again, Yeltsin rejected the bill.

Graham reaches millions

Of course, no wrap-up on world evangelism would be complete without an update on evangelist Billy Graham, who continues to outdo himself with broader and more effective outreaches year after year.

Graham conducted a European crusade in March, speaking to nearly one million German listeners in Essen, and an additional 7.2 million others across Europe. The most far-reaching crusade of Graham's ministry, ProChrist '93, was transmitted by satellite to more than 1,400 centers across Europe and Asia, reaching 16 time zones, and 44 languages.

Trouten is an editor with Evangelical Press News Service.

Floating in white space suits, 368 miles above the earth, astronauts from the space shuttle Endeavour worked to repair the \$2.1 billion Hubble Space Telescope. As the nation watched on live television, the Endeavour crew made a record five space walks during their 11-day December mission. They installed corrective lenses, hoping to give Hubble a clear view of stars up to six trillion miles away.

In a way, the Hubble repair is a fitting symbol for the church in 1993. The approach of the century's end is helping missions organizations focus their goal-setting. Disputes within denominations — and in the world at large — are clearly presenting alternative visions for the future. And though we still see "through a glass, darkly," the day is drawing nearer when we will see our Savior "face to face."

Inferno in Waco

Cult leader David Koresh thought that the day of seeing Jesus "face to face" had already come — and that he was the Second Coming of Christ. Koresh, the son of a carpenter and a member of the Branch Davidian sect, a radical apocalyptic splinter of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, told the Waco Tribune-Herald, "If the Bible is true, then I'm Christ. But so what? Look at 2,000 years ago. What's so great about being Christ? A man nailed to the cross. A man of sorrow acquainted with grief. You know, being Christ ain't nothin'."

Koresh, whose given name was Vernon Howell, captured national attention after his followers took part in a shoot-out with federal agents who were trying to serve a warrant. The initial conflict left four federal agents and several cult members dead, and led to a 51-day armed standoff at the cult's "Apocalypse Ranch" near Waco.

Here a cult, there a cult

While the Branch Davidians were grabbing all of the headlines, other religious cults were also active in 1993.

Around the world in Kiev, Ukraine, imprisoned cult leader Maria Devi Khrystos insisted that she is God, and predicted that the world would end Nov. 14. It didn't.

The Church of Scientology received tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service, bringing to an end a 25-year battle with the government. The decision is thought to be worth millions of dollars in donations for the religious cult.

The Christian Science Church received \$53 million in a settlement growing out of a bequest by two sisters, who promised to leave the church \$100 million if it published a book written by one's husband. The church initially refused to publish the book, which calls founder Mary Baker Eddy an

equal with Jesus, but relented and published it in 1991. The church needs the money. Financial woes forced it to stop publishing its World Monitor magazine in May. And that was three months before being ordered to pay \$14.2 million in damages to the father of a boy who died of diabetes when his Christian Science mother and stepfather chose to pursue divine healing rather than take the child to a doctor.

Give me that mainline religion

Mainstream religious groups had an interesting year as well.

Southern Baptists had what has become a typical year, with various leaders resigning or being fired, and various factions accusing one another of politicizing the church. An unexpected high point of the year for the denomination came in September, when a study compiled for internal use by the SBC Home Mission Board wound up in the Birmingham News. Intended as an aid to church planting, the county-by-county breakdown of how many in Alabama are on their way to hell didn't sit too well with the general public — many of whom seemed to take offense at the idea that anybody is going to hell. Explained spokesperson Martin King, "We don't know who's lost and who's saved. All we know is that as we understand the doctrine of salvation, a lot of people are lost."

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) apologized to the Jewish people for the anti-Semitic writings of Martin Luther. In 1543, Luther published a 90-page tract titled, "On the Jews and Their Lies," in which he called the Jewish people "blood-thirsty bloodhounds and murderers of all Christendom," and said, "We are at fault in not slaying them."

But the real high point of the year for the ELCA came in late October, when its task force on human sexuality released a report which endorsed homosexuality and suggested that commitment, not legal marriage, was what mattered. The church leadership discovered quickly that what may have seemed like a good idea in an ivory tower in Chicago just wouldn't play in Peoria — or in a lot of other cities, where pastors and laypersons alike said, "Not with my church you don't." The fallout from this bombshell is still being heard throughout the 5.2 million-member ELCA. Karen Bloomquist, the guiding force behind the report, stepped down within a month, and the denomination's Church Council hastily appointed a new panel to reconsider the statement, in light of the "strong reaction and widespread concern" it had generated.

"The approach of the century's end is helping missions organizations focus their goal-setting. Disputes... are clearly presenting alternative visions for the future."

— Doug Trouten

from homosexual activists, but not from conservatives, most of whom feel the new policy is stronger than the old one. The year ended on an ironic tone, with the Clinton administration — which promised to end the military's gay ban — going to the Supreme Court in a successful attempt to block a San Francisco judge's order striking down the ban.

The buck stops where?

In 1993, it seemed that when President Bill Clinton wasn't flip-flopping on issues, he was distancing himself from the positions taken by his appointees.

In October, AIDS Czar Kristine Gebbie enraged conservatives by calling the U.S. a "repressed Victorian society" and urging all Americans, including teens, to seek pleasure in sex. Gebbie, a lesbian and Clinton appointee whose job it is to stem the spread of AIDS, made the remarks at a teen pregnancy conference. Perhaps Gebbie has found evidence that AIDS is spread by lack of casual sex. Then again, maybe she's been holding some of her graphs upside down.

In November, Clinton distanced himself from a legal brief prepared by Attorney General Janet Reno's Justice Department which asked the Supreme Court to provide greater legal protection for child pornographers. Earlier in the year, he distanced himself from "Rambo" Reno's decision to send tanks in after the Branch Davidians in Waco.

And in December, Clinton disavowed remarks by Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders, who had suggested legalizing drugs to reduce the nation's crime rate. Elders also

HOUSE TOPS

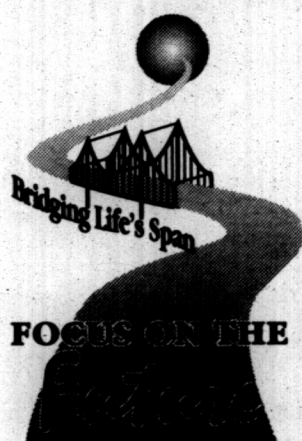
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 13, 1994

HouseTops is a supplement to the **Baptist Record** and is produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Pastors Leading The Church To Grow Through Preschool and Children's Ministry

by David Raddin, Pastor, FBC, Yazoo City, and Randy Tompkins, MBCB



In order for a church to grow in the 90s by reaching young and younger median adults, a high priority must be placed on the children and preschool ministries of the church. The priority must be given at the point of the room assignment, building maintenance, leadership, enlistment and assignment, and security.

There are seven areas that must be closely defined:

- I. Security:** Providing a good security system for the child presents the concept of a caring church to parents who are not church members. Churches may be losing the opportunity of reaching some adults due to the lack of a security system.
- II. Health Issues:** Being health conscious is no longer only a young adult trend. America is health aware. Parents bringing children and preschoolers to church will view the church as a caring place if presented written health care guidelines that are followed in the department rooms.
- III. Room size, Arrangement and Furniture:** Church leaders must move the children and preschool room assignments to a higher level of priority in the 90s than we have done in the 70s and 80s. No longer can we give Children and Preschool departments the rooms that are "left over." The size of the room and the amount of furniture in the room may dictate whether or not a church will reach families with children and/or preschoolers.
- IV. Reaching the Proper Age Group:** A definite study of the ministry area of the church should be done in order to understand the impact reaching families with children and preschoolers will have on the church.
- V. Children and Preschool Policies:** We are living in an age where people tend to think about a lawsuit first and the well-being of their family second. A church must have a written set of guidelines for volunteer and paid workers to follow.

"Pastors..." continued on back page

CREATED TO BE
Creative

featuring: **The COMPANY**

Ministry • Missions

February 25-26, 1994
Crossgates Baptist Church
Brandon, Mississippi

Cost: Banquet \$6.00 per person
Festival \$14.00 per person
(includes breakfast and lunch)

TOM TOOMBS

Registrations POSTMARKED FEBRUARY 1, or earlier receive a Festival T-shirt upon arrival.

REGISTRATION FORM			
Christian Performing Arts Festival			
February 25-26, 1994			
Crossgates Baptist Church			
Cost: Pizza and Performance \$6.00			
Festival \$14.00			
Name: _____			
Address: _____			
City/State/Zip: _____			
Phone: Home _____		Work _____	
Church: _____		Association: _____	
# of Adults attending festival _____		# of Youth attending festival _____	
= Total _____		= Total _____	
# of Adults attending banquet _____		# of Youth attending banquet _____	
= Total _____		= Total _____	
Total enclosed _____ (full payment required)			
Signature of Group Leader _____			
Send this form and payment to: Mississippi Baptist Convention, C/O Wes Pegues, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.			
Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.			
() Our group is interested in a Ministry & Missions Opportunity. Please send more information.			

pray this day....

January 16-31, 1994

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>thanking God for your own good health</p> <p>16</p>	<p>for the volunteer mission groups leaving today from the Mississippi Delta area to work in Zimbabwe, returning February 3, that they'll stay healthy</p> <p>17</p>	<p>for the caregivers of the homebound, that their loving care will be accepted</p> <p>18</p>	<p>that you'll take time to make a list of several homebound, with their phone numbers and addresses</p> <p>19</p>	<p>that you'll be willing to call, write or visit each one on your list</p> <p>20</p>	<p>for God's help in dealing with one habit that may be threatening to your health</p> <p>21</p>	<p>for medical missionaries around the world, that the nationals will be good learners</p> <p>22</p>
<p>giving thanks that Dr. Rebekah Naylor's license was renewed for a year in Bangalore, India</p> <p>23</p>	<p>for the Baptist Nursing Fellowship in their many projects here and around the world</p> <p>24</p>	<p>that you may find a way to be of help as a volunteer in your areas with a hospital or nursing home</p> <p>25</p>	<p>for grace to offer to help with errands for a homebound friend on a regular basis</p> <p>26</p>	<p>for medical personnel in Mississippi who give of their time in missions efforts, especially our Mississippi Medical/Dental Fellowship</p> <p>27</p>	<p>for church groups who minister to economically disadvantaged people with special needs</p> <p>28</p>	<p>for pastors and other church staff members as they care for the homebound</p> <p>29</p>
<p>with gratitude the lovely Christian witness of so many homebound</p> <p>30</p>	<p>that the dark of many winter days will be dispelled by the Light of the world, maybe using you as one of the rays of brightness</p> <p>31</p>	<p>Wintertime brings special needs for a special people group, members of which all of us know...the homebound...homebound from sickness, age, infirmity...homebound temporarily or permanently...special needs to be met by special people, you and me...in Jesus' Name.</p>				<p>Prayer Ministry Office Baptist Building, Jackson PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY</p>

CHURCH MUSIC CONFERENCE

Temple Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

March 10, 1:00 p.m.

March 11, 12:30 p.m.

• Mark Edwards
Minister of Music
FBC, Nashville

• Mike Burt
Minister of Music
Champion Forest BC
Houston, Texas

...Featuring...

Mississippi College
Concert Chorale

Concert
March 10
3:30 p.m.

...

University of
Southern Mississippi Handbells

Banquet
March 10
5:30 p.m.

...

Mississippi Singing Churchmen

Concert
March 10
/ 7:00 p.m.

Mississippi Super Summer

July 25-29, 1994

William Carey College

Super Summer is designed for the young person who is a leader, a mature and responsible Christian. Young people attending spend approximately 20 hours in evangelism and discipleship training, and another 20 hours in athletics, small group sessions and free time.

Throughout the schools we help these young people utilize the freedom they have in Christ to change the world.

Raising the
STANDARD

featuring:



Reggie Smith

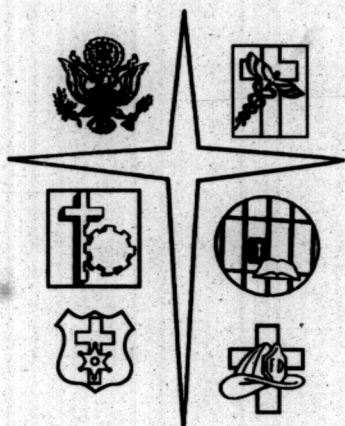


Mike Curry

For information contact:
Wes Pegues, consultant,
Discipleship & Family Ministry Department,
P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530
or call him at (601)968-3800.

CHAPLAINS: Caring and Sharing

The luncheon for the Mississippi Baptist Chaplains Association will be held in the Sky Room (4th floor) of the Baptist Building on Tuesday, January 25, at 12 noon.



No program is planned. Bring your ideas for discussion. Cost of the meal is \$5.00. For Reservations, call the Cooperative Missions Department, 968-3800, Ext. 3961. Richard Brogan serves as staff consultant to this group.

NEW WORK FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

JANUARY 25, 1994

7:30 A.M. • Sky Room - Baptist Building

Program will feature Multi-housing Missions: Apartment Community Testimonies and New Work Update. This is a fellowship meeting for those who are starting, developing, or leading in missions, young churches, or missions/ministries.

To make a reservation, please call the Cooperative Missions Department 968-3800, Ext. 3961 by January 21.

GA/ACTEENS DAY at

WILLIAM CAREY COLLEGE

featuring the
William Carey Lady Crusaders

February 5, 1994

\$7.50 per person
(includes basketball game, program, meal, favor and limited insurance)

Registration: 1:30 p.m.

Carey gym

Program: 2:30 p.m.

Ballgame: 5:00 p.m.

GAs and Acteens, grades 1-12 and sponsors are invited to attend

Deadline for pre-registration: **January 31, 1994**
no refunds after **February 3**

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

featuring the
Mississippi College Lady Chocs

February 19, 1994

\$7.50 per person
(includes basketball game, program, meal, favor and limited insurance)

Registration: 3:00 p.m.

MC Coliseum

Program: 4:00 p.m.

Ballgame: 6:00 p.m.

GAs and Acteens, grades 1-12 and sponsors are invited to attend

Deadline for pre-registration: **February 14, 1994**
no refunds after **February 17**



Please register me (my group) for GA/Acteens Day at:

- ☐ William Carey College, February 5, 1994
☐ Mississippi College, February 19, 1994

Church _____ Association _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Church Phone _____

No. registering _____ Amount sent _____

Mail form and payment to: **GA/Acteen Days • WMU • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530**

"A Time To Grow" GLORIETA WMU CONFERENCE

July 15-22, 1994

\$790 Round-trip from Jackson

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Roundtrip airfare Jackson/Albuquerque
- Van for transfers and sightseeing
- 7 nights accommodations including hotel tax in Albuquerque
 - 1 night WINROCK HOTEL (or similar)
 - 6 nights accommodations at Glorieta (double occupancy)
- All meals at Glorieta
- Registration and conference fees
- \$250,000 flight insurance

TOUR CONDITIONS:

AIR TRANSPORTATION: Airfare based on special rates by DELTA AIR LINES for roundtrip Jackson/Albuquerque in effect November 15, 1993, and subject to change.

CANCELLATION: Cancellation from the tour anytime after enrollment will result in a penalty of \$100 per person. Additional cancellation penalties after June 1, 1994, can amount to a maximum of \$400 depending on date of cancellation. OPTIONAL trip cancellation insurance is available and recommended for \$22.

ENROLLMENT: A deposit of \$170 per person is required by January 25 to confirm enrollment. Make checks payable to WMU and mail to WMU, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530 with completed coupon below.

☐ Enclosed is \$170 per person to confirm enrollment in the GLORIETA WMU CONFERENCE, July 15-22, 1994.

Name _____

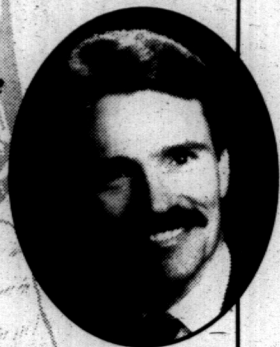
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**1994
Mississippi Baptist
State Handbell Festivals**

Mississippi College
April 22-23
Hart Morris
Clinician



**Gulfshore
Baptist Assembly**
April 29-30
Gerald Armstrong
Clinician



All Hail the Power, arr. McChesney
Triune Music #HB 334

Amazing Grace, arr. Dobrinski
Agape #1663

Blessed Exaltation, McKiveen
Lakestate #HB 93033

Holy Manna, arr. Morris
Fred Bock Music #BG 0921

Renaissance, Lowther
Agape #1432

The above selections are available through the Baptist Book Store in Jackson.

From **THE HANDBELL HYMNAL**, two hymns will also be used. They are:

Worthy of Worship and Savior, Like A Shepherd Lead Us

These hymn arrangements are available in **THE HANDBELL HYMNAL** or you may request copies from the Church Music Department.

Registration materials are being mailed the month of January. If you need further information, contact the Church Music Department, 968-3800.

"Pastors..." continued from front page

VI. Corrective Attitudes toward Preschool and Children's Ministry: Historically, church leaders have thought in terms of adult and youth needs first and then children and preschool needs. Today's parents are saying to church leaders "My children come first."

VII. Publicity: A church that develops the correct attitude assigns the proper rooms, enlists qualified people, and provides a good security system but does not let the community know about it will find it difficult to reach young and younger median adults.



Church Weekday Education Clinics

February 5 - Temple Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

February 19 - First Baptist Church, Starkville*

March 5, First Baptist Church, Jackson

(Note new location for February 19 clinic)

Classes at these clinics often fill up and reservations are made on a first come basis. The order of registration is determined by the order written registration forms and fees are received in the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board offices in Jackson.

For details on the conferences and course offerings call Barbara Brown, Conference Coordinator, at 956-6243, or the Discipleship and Family Ministry office at 968-3800. To register send official registration form and fees (check payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board) to:

Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
Post Office Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205-0530

**BIVOCATIONAL MINISTERS/WIVES
FELLOWSHIP BANQUET**

During the Evangelism Conference

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1994

5:00 - 6:15 p.m.

at

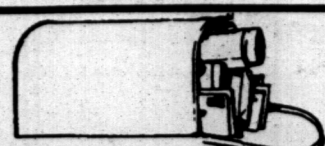
PENN'S FISH HOUSE

2085 Lakeland Drive

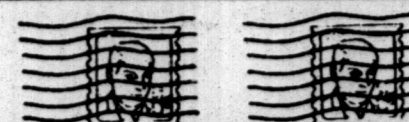
(Hinds County side before Pearl River Bridge)

Meal is compliments of the Church Administration/
Pastoral Ministries Department.

No registration required. Invite others!



Letters to the editor



Questions scholars

Editor:
The Clarion-Ledger, on Dec. 12 printed an article about a biblical seminar which concluded that Jesus never said, "I am the way," or "Go ye into all the world," or "more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents."

This group of "biblical scholars" cast grave doubt on the very Word of God, the Holy Bible. They would have you and me believe that they have new knowledge of what Jesus said and that the book has been wrong for some 2,000 years. Everything we have been able to discover from written history, archeology, and the personal testimonies of hundreds of thousands of witnesses throughout the past 2,000 years has shown the holy and complete Word of God.

In fact, every teaching of man should be held up to the Word of God. You can and should challenge the doctrines and teachings of men or women. If this were done more often, we would not have the fiasco of Jim Jones, Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, and so many other fallen religious leaders whose followers listened to the words of men but failed to compare them to the Word of God.

Thanks to the teachings of such men as Darwin, Nietzsche, Norman Cousins, Alvin Toffler, and many others, we have the single most lawless and selfish society in the history of the human race. "Good is bad and bad is good" are the two most often told lies in our world. We cry crocodile tears over the slaughter of whales but turn our eyes the other way over the slaughter of the innocent in legalized abortion clinics.

If Jesus did not say he was the way, the truth, and the life, and that

no man could come to the Father but by him, then there is no way to a holy God because just any way will not get you there.

It is time that we stopped fighting each other and become filled with the strength of the Holy Spirit. We have no time for bigotry, racism, religious posturing, men's theology, but only for the work of God as shown to us in the totally accurate and divinely inspired Word of God, the Bible.

Jimmie D. Flake, pastor
Bethlehem Church
Ackerman

Ruschlikon seminary

Editor:

Thank you for printing the article, "Prague chosen new home of Ruschlikon" in your Dec. 9 issue. This article gave a more comprehensive financial situation at Ruschlikon than has been printed before. When it became known that the Foreign Mission Board, under the direction of Keith Parks, wished to "give" Ruschlikon to the European Baptist Federation, I questioned why we should "give" away such a valuable piece of property. The reason was it was such a financial drain on the Foreign Mission Board, considering the small number of students it was reaching, and the high costs in Switzerland. Why, I asked, did we not sell the property and buy a smaller facility? No, no, the European Baptist Federation wanted that particular piece of property for free! Not only that, they wanted support for a number of years. Now, they have finally made the decision that Keith Parks should have recommended a long time ago... sell the lovely piece of property that overlooks Lake Zurich. Then buy or build an ample facility

in Prague, where the operating and living costs are much more affordable and within the reach of the potential students that need to be trained. Perhaps then the student enrollment will be increased from the 30-50 as stated in one of your letters to the editor. Incidentally, I have visited Ruschlikon on two occasions. It is a beautiful piece of real estate, but we should have been more accountable of the real mission — having an affordable seminary, not a beautiful piece of real estate.

K.C. Mason
Jackson

Praise for Mississippi

Editor:

Evil forces have invaded the school system, forcing most leaders to surrender, and now freedom of religion is even off the football fields and out of the classrooms so the youths can be programmed different.

The evil forces were winning on all fronts until some Christians in Mississippi started fighting back. That is what started it all. Churches of all faiths, race, and color began to unite into one great body like Indian tribes on a war path; it was like waking up a sleeping giant. All over America churches are beating the drums, whooping it up, and crying out for freedom. They are desperate and there's no stopping them now.

One thing we learned about the American people. Their religion is like a nail. The harder you hit it, the deeper it'll go.

I'm not a big somebody, just a retired small town barber, but I felt a strong urge to write this letter. And, to say: Hurrah, Hurrah for the people in Mississippi for taking the lead, like Moses to free God's people from the invisible tyrant force that led Russia down the wrong road and is now in America swallowing our freedom bite by bite.

Paul Sutphin
Pearisburg, Va.

Memorial to Claxton

Editor:

For almost 40 years, I have known and loved Perry Claxton, former pastor and pastor emeritus of First Church, Greenville. In these many years I have seen him minister to those in need, to those who were bereaved, and those who had personal crises. His ministry was one of love and compassion, always feeling the deep hurts and concerns of those to whom he ministered.

His role as pastor and staff leader has nurtured many a young minister as they started out in their life's calling. I know that any success I may have had as a minister was due in part to his encouragement and understanding.

In the city of Greenville where he pastored for more than 20 years and lived for 20 more, he had become one of Greenville's pastors, not just to the Baptists, but to all faiths as he spent his retirement years in counseling and interim work.

Truly, many lives have been touched by his life, but he died as he would have wanted. He went to sleep to awaken in God's presence.

I, personally, and we as a church and city, shall miss him, but "thanks be to God who giveth us the victory," he is now in the presence of God. I am thankful for having an opportunity to serve with him and know him as a friend.

Kenneth Forbus
Minister to senior adults
First Church
Greenville

Worship innovation

Editor:

A few weeks ago, my husband and I were in Memphis visiting our daughter and her family and went to church with them on a Saturday afternoon at 5:30... yes, I did say Saturday.

Younger people — mostly those under 50 — do not enjoy the staid atmosphere of most churches today. They like music that is

upbeat, joyful and yet worshipful. Most of us know why church is on the first day of the week, but what is wrong with having worship on Saturday? This church is packed each Saturday service and then again on Sunday morning they have another informal service at 9:45. Then at 11, the service for the suit and tie congregation. They are reaching hundreds with the gospel message that otherwise might not be reached. I saw people there from babies to old people. It was the most enjoyable church service I have been in for a long time.

I believe that if churches are going to reach the multitudes with the message of the gospel, they are going to have to change some of their dull modes of worship. People are born again when they hear and accept the gospel. Long theological dissertations are for those who have been born again, with a desire to mature in the Lord. Give these younger people a worship service that is joyful, exciting, and informal, and I believe the churches will see large crowds and many more people won to the Lord.

Thelma McPherson
Columbus

Editor's Note: Several churches in our state have experienced the Saturday night "seekers' service."

Supports DUI bill

Editor:

In August 1992, I stood above the caskets of Vernon and Rebecca Brett and pledged that their deaths would not be in vain. They were killed in a DUI related accident. One morning the idea came to me to start a DUI STOPPER program, similar to Crime Stoppers, but have the DUIs pay for the rewards.

This idea has developed into a bill that will be introduced by Rep. Tommy Reynolds of Charleston. Much thought and work has gone into this bill. A caller would be able to phone into his local dispatcher and report anonymously a possible DUI offender. The patrolman would still have to find probable cause before the suspect could be stopped. If the offender is convicted and fined, a reward of \$50 would then be paid the caller.

The bill calls for \$50 to be added to all DUI fines to finance this program. It will be under the direction of the Commissioner of Public Safety.

The psychology of the idea is what will make it work. The purpose of the bill is to get the drinker to rethink about driving drunk rather than take a chance on getting caught. The drinker will have to consider that anybody he comes in contact with can report him anonymously and receive a \$50 reward.

Mississippi is last in the nation in DUI enforcement. Fifty-five percent of all traffic deaths in 1992 were DUI related.

It is my desire that this be truly an effort of avoidable deaths and havoc caused in drunk driving in Mississippi.

Phil Otey Sherman Jr.
Charleston

STEVE GREEN

in

concert



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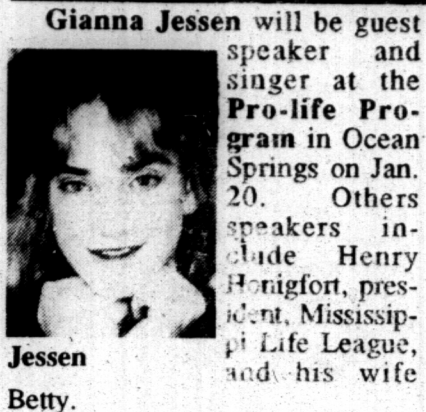


Dorie Van Stone
Sunday, Jan. 16
8:30 and 10:45 a.m.

Mrs. Stone, author of *Dorie... the Girl Nobody Loved* and *No Place to Cry*, is on the staff of Precept Ministries, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Park Place is located on Highway 80 E., directly across the street from Wal Mart. For more information, call 939-6282.

Just for the Record



Jessen
Betty.

Mississippi College will offer a series of reviews to aid students preparing for the upcoming ACT testing, and interested parents and students are encouraged to contact

the Division of Continuing Education for further details. Review sessions will be held on Jan. 22 and Jan. 29. For more information, call 925-3264.

First Church, Biloxi, will offer a 16-hour Conversational English (CE) Workshop, Jan. 20-23. To pre-register, contact Rene Sugg, Jackson, 982-0262, or Charlotte Forsythe, Biloxi, 388-2754. Neron Smith, Missions Extension and Associational Administration Department, serves as state literacy consultant for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

First Church, Byram, will offer FIRST PLACE, a Christ-cen-

tered health program. Orientation will be Jan. 16 at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call 372-3156.

The Kevin Spencer Family from Shelby, Ohio, will sing at **New Prospect Church, Carthage**, in the 11 a.m. worship service on Jan. 16. Dinner will be served following the morning service.

Mississippi ranked 11th in the Southern Baptist Convention in the Total Study Course Awards, as announced by the Baptist Sunday School Board. There were 26,930 awards given. Hinds-Madison Association ranked ninth among all SBC associations, with 2,989 awards.

WRITER

From page 3

And Ann lost her home church. She confided her story to her Sunday School class in strict confidence, but someone told. The next week a man approaching Ann's pew said out loud to his family, "We can't sit here! That woman has AIDS!"

She did find a different loving congregation to turn to. Her new pastor, hearing her story, put his arms around her. "I could feel his tears and I felt safe enough to let him see mine," said Ann in Calvert's story.

She gave her testimony in the new church one night. After her remarks she said, "I guess now you will want me to find another place to go to church." Calvert recalled what Ann told her they said: "No way. We are your church. We are going to help you." That kind of affirmation really buoyed her spirits.

Since then, Ann has worked in AIDS awareness and helps in a support group. So doing the story with Calvert was relatively close to Ann's own aims.

Ann says she has lost 163 friends to AIDS. "That doesn't count people I've met once or twice," she said. She hasn't had pneumonia, a sign of what is known as full-blown AIDS, where bodily functions suffer. But "the fatigue level is incredible," she

said. Knowing others with AIDS "is like looking in a crystal ball," said Ann. "I know it's coming, I just don't know when."

Ann said her biggest concern is the pain her family and friends will go through. "Emotionally, I'm mostly OK. A lot of days, I'm not so great." She cries herself to sleep a lot of nights, knowing that she's "in a club that's growing and growing...."

That's where friends come in. "My church friends remind me there is someone even bigger than all of us and who is not going to leave me alone. I need reminding because I forget. Stuart reminds me. That's why I turn to her. Sometimes that reminder is what keeps me going."

Ann said it is the most natural thing in the world to pick up the phone and call Calvert. "Sometimes I call her before I call any of my (local) friends."

Calvert said Ann took the first copy of her story to her counselor who said, "I can't believe you told this to a total stranger. I've been trying to get you to say this for two years."

Bennett dies of apparent heart attack

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — G. Willis Bennett, retired provost at Southern Seminary, died Jan. 5 of an apparent heart attack.

Bennett, 74, joined the faculty of the Louisville, Ky., school in 1959 as an associate professor of Christian ethics.

Bennett is survived by his wife, Caroline, three daughters, and six grandchildren.

Calvert said Ann told her she felt God wanted her to tell her story. "It would help Baptist women understand and be like a catharsis for her," Calvert said.

Each of the women said she would like to meet the other in person. It's not a long distance between north Mississippi and St. Louis, they both said. "It seems like Stuart has always been a friend," Ann said. "It's wonderful to feel like I could tell her absolutely anything." Calvert calls Ann to share a burden or a prayer request or a happy thought.

Calvert knows Ann's openness to her is a sign of close friendship. "She includes me concerning her private thoughts," she said, "perhaps because we haven't met. She doesn't think I'll be too hurt... even though I will be."

Nicholas, director of Office of Communication, wrote this story on assignment from WMU.

Richard Lloyd Sr. dies at 90

Richard Lloyd Sr., 90, a retired minister, died of lung disease Jan. 2 at Starkville Manor. Services were held at First Church, Starkville.

Lloyd, a native of Pennsylvania, was a graduate of Southern Seminary and in 1982 received the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year award from the seminary.

After retiring from the ministry, he and his late wife, Edith, served as missionary associates with the Foreign Mission Board in Guam.

Survivors include a son, R. Raymond Lloyd Jr. of Starkville; a grandson; a granddaughter; and four great-grandchildren.

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Staff Changes

First Church, Leakesville, has called **H. Gregg Thomas** as pastor effective Jan. 1. He previously served Fredonia Church, New Albany, for seven years. He is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and Luther Rice Seminary. He is also a Great Commission Breakthrough consultant for the Sunday School Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

First Church, Water Valley, voted unanimously to make **Guy Reedy Jr.**, pastor emeritus. Reedy served as pastor of First Church from January 1970 until Sept. 30, 1992. Randy Bain is pastor.

Mike Weaver has resigned as pastor at **Philadelphia Church, Etta**. He is available for a pastorate or interim pastorate. To contact him call 234-2844.

Roxie Church, Franklin Association, has called **Vance Windom** as pastor effective Jan. 2. A native of Hazlehurst, he received his education at Mississippi College and attended New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Highland Church, Crystal Springs.

Heucks Retreat Church, Brookhaven, has called **Donnie South** as pastor effective Jan. 2. South, a native of Batesville, is a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Siloam Church, Meadville.

William Wright has resigned as pastor of **Oakvale Church, Lawrence County**, and is avail-

able for pulpit supply, interim pastor, or revivals. He may be reached at his home in Wesson by calling 643-5852 or in McComb at 249-2538.

Old Pearl Valley Church, Neshoba County, has recently called **Ricky Summers** as pastor. A native of Kosciusko, Summers received his education at New Orleans Seminary and Andersonville Seminary.

Levon Moore has concluded an interim pastorate at **East End Church, Columbus**. He is available for interim pastorate or pulpit supply and may be contacted at 289-6059.

Woodville Church, Woodville, has called **Brian Howell** as minister of music and youth. A native of St. Louis, Mo., he received his education at William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., and currently attends New Orleans Seminary.

Missionary News

Asbury and Hope Martin, missionaries to Argentina, are in the States (address: P.O. Box 933, Fulton, MS 38843). He was born in South Carolina and considers Cleveland his hometown. She is the former Hope Clements of Corinth.

Steve and Vidonia Smith, missionaries to Argentina, are in the States (address: Apt. 310, 500 Northpointe Pky., Jackson, MS 39211). He was born in California and considers Hattiesburg his hometown. The former Vidonia Smith, she was born in Texas and considers White Oak her hometown.

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Naval academy minister dies

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (BP) — Dick Bumpass, 60, director of Baptist Student Union ministries at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., for 24 years, died Dec. 7 after a massive heart attack.

He was BSU director for Arkansas State University from 1962-69 and pastor of Ward Chapel Church in Atoka, Okla., from 1957-62.

Bumpass is survived by his wife, Nancy, and daughter Tiffan, both of Annapolis; daughter Lori and sons Nick and Kelly, all of Texas.



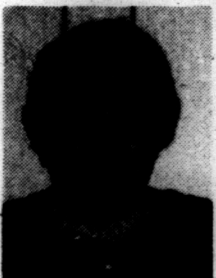
L.E. and Josette Ponder were recently honored with a surprise reception by Poplar Springs Church, Mendenhall, and presented an engraved silver tray for 40 years of service as church treasurer. Benny Still is pastor.

M. Lamar Trawick will retire from the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps, Jan. 31. He will be honored Jan. 21 at the chapel at the Meridian Naval Air Station. Trawick is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary. During his 27 years as chaplain, he has served aboard ships, naval hospitals, and in several foreign countries.

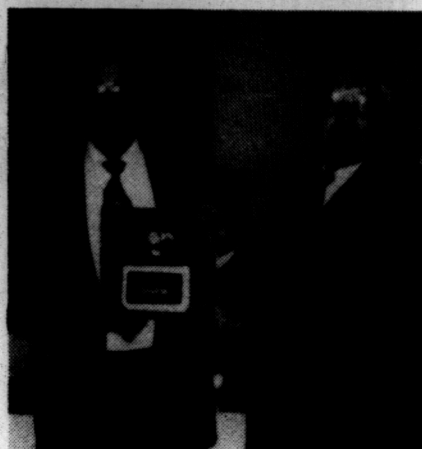


Trawick

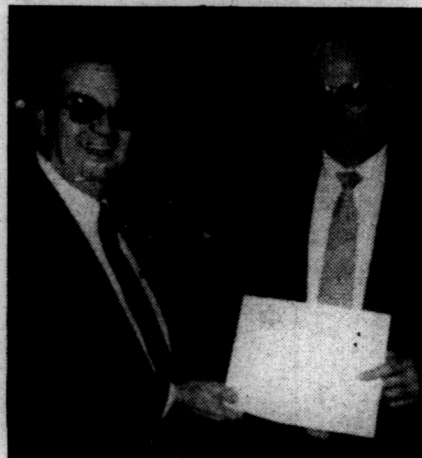
Laurene Graves Means was honored at Union Church, Rankin County, for her years of service. A life-long resident of Mayton community, she is still an active member of Union Church where she has served in all phases of church work for



Means



Dorsey Church, Itawamba County, recognized Alford York on Oct. 31 for serving the church 32 years as music director. Presenting the plaque to York is Jerry Estes, pastor.



Tony Hardin, director of disaster relief for Calhoun Association, has been ordained as a deacon in Bethany Church, Slate Springs. He is active in church life and has assisted in mission building projects in other areas of the nation. Hardin, right, is pictured with Henry Hight, pastor.

over 40 years. She has seven children, 17 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren.

Dorie Van Stone, author of *Dorie... the Girl Nobody Loved* and *No Place to Cry*, will speak on Jan. 16 at the 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. services at Park Place Church, Brandon. Bobby Williamson is pastor.

Sunday School Board cancels women's enrichment conference

ATLANTA (ABP) — A national Christian women's enrichment conference, scheduled March 24-26 in Atlanta, has been canceled by the Baptist Sunday School Board because the dates conflict with a similar event sponsored by a nearby church.

The "Panorama of Purpose" conference was to be the second annual event co-developed by the Sunday School Board and Woman's Missionary Union. Last year's conference, held March 5-7 in San Antonio, Texas, was attended by about 800 women.

Primary to the decision to cancel this year's meeting was the fact the dates overlap with a women's conference at First Church, Snellville, Ga., about 25 miles from Atlanta. The church's conference, scheduled March 25-26, is expected to draw more than 2,000 participants, according to Jay Johnston, acting field services director in the Sunday School Board's Adult Discipleship and Family Enrichment Department.

"The sponsoring church is an active Southern Baptist church supporting the programs and resources in the convention. It is the role of the Baptist Sunday School Board to support the local churches and not compete with them," Johnston wrote in a letter to conference personnel.

Johnston's letter was reprinted

in a newsletter for WMU staff at Baptist state conventions with the notation that WMU leaders "were not involved in making the decision" to cancel the conference.

"The bottom line of it was we just didn't want to go competing head-to-head the same weekend," Johnston told Associated Baptist Press.

"I think they'll be doing them in the future. It's just off for this year," he said.

While the event was being co-developed by the Sunday School Board and Woman's Missionary Union, a WMU spokeswoman confirmed the decision to cancel was made unilaterally by the Sunday School Board.

Trudy Johnson, WMU mission involvement specialist, said Jay Johnston called her first to say he was thinking about canceling the conference and later to say he had made the decision.

She described her reaction as "shock and disappointment." "I hurt for the women who are not going to be able to have this experience," she said.

Last spring's conference in San Antonio "was a very significant event," she said. "It was the only national conference for women with no agenda other than to meet their needs."

As co-developer, Johnston said, WMU helped with promotion and development of general

sessions and conferences and provided some conference personnel. She said it is "significant" for WMU to remain involved in the planning, since WMU's program statement calls for promoting missions involvement and support among Baptist women.

"We want to help all women become all Christ wants them to be," she said. "That can't happen without seeing missions as part of a Christian lifestyle."

In November the Sunday School Board announced it is starting its own women's enrichment ministry, which some observers worried would compete with WMU programs.

The staffs of both WMU and other SBC agencies were looking forward to Atlanta event for spiritual and professional development for female employees, Johnston said.

About 100 staff members at the Atlanta-based Home Mission Board had planned to take a day off, with pay, to attend the conference, said HMB spokesman Martin King. The board was in the process of freeing up funds to pay registration costs for employees.

"Our folks were very disappointed it was canceled," King said. He said the board plans to put together its own one-day conference for its female employees in its place.

Former youth minister promotes Super Bowl package for churches

DALLAS (BP) — A former Baptist youth minister hopes to help churches nationwide use the Jan. 30 Super Bowl to score a touchdown in youth ministry.

Mitch Beckman of Compass Communications in Dallas is directing an effort called "Let's Party Super Bowl Sunday."

The company is selling a package of videotapes, promotional items, and party guides for churches to create a Christian emphasis on the highest holy day

of America's favorite armchair religion. Cost is \$95.

The foundation of the program is a one-hour pre-game video featuring such sports celebrities as Herschel Walker, Bobby Bowden, Bill Bates, and Gene Stallings, along with Christian entertainers such as 4-Him and Stephen Curtis Chapman. The sports figures and entertainers will offer humor, music, and testimonies about their faith in Jesus Christ.

A 12-minute video for use at half time features Spencer Tillman, Houston Oilers running back, talking specifically about what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The kit also includes a planning guide with suggested activities for non-sports fans.

The "Let's Party" program is being produced and packaged by the same folks who delivered Ross Perot into America's living rooms with his charts and graphs during last year's presidential campaign. Compass Communications is a for-profit production company owned by Lee Martin, brother of Larry Martin, ministry section vice president with the Home Mission Board.

Beckman, the company's new specialist in religious marketing, is a graduate of Mid-America Seminary in Memphis, Tenn. The

Lake City, Fla., native has served Southern Baptist churches in Texas and Mississippi as youth minister and currently is a member of First Church, Coppell, Texas.

"The major influence on American teens today is media," Beckman explained. "They're selling everything."

Instead of complaining about this, the church should find a way to capitalize on it, he said. "Why don't we take where kids are anyway and create something positive?"

The Super Bowl is an event in itself — and one that's likely to draw teens and their families away from Sunday night church, Beckman said. "All we're doing is tagging something in front of it and in the middle of it."

Although the package is being marketed by a for-profit company, the goal is not to make money, Beckman said. "We have enough other things that are working that we're not depending on this to put the company over."

The company promises to ship the "Let's Party" kit to any church within 48 hours of receiving the order. The delivery cost for orders placed after Jan. 15 is slightly higher. More information can be obtained by calling 1-800-947-6411.

The snow is already on the mountain.

Will you be?

Ski Retreats Thanksgiving-Easter **Ski Fuge 2,3,4** March 7-11, 1994; March 14-18, 1994; March 21-25, 1994 • For more information write to Glorieta Conference Center at P.O. Box 8, Dept. 10194, Glorieta, NM 87535 or call (505)757-6161.

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Separation of church and state —

History of Baptists and First Amendment are closely linked

By Frank Stagg

Tensions and debate are intense over prayer and Bible reading in the public schools and over the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. As Baptists, if we are to be true to our heritage and safeguard religious freedom, it is urgent that we remind ourselves how the First Amendment came about and the long experience of religious persecution which occasioned its passage.

Southern Baptists would do well to reissue and study again such books as that by Louie Latimer Owens, *Baptist Milestones* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1958), to which this article is deeply indebted. This book was introduced by a stalwart Mississippi Baptist, Norman W. Cox, and published by the Training Union Department for study in our churches.

When the Constitution was written in Philadelphia, there was no provision for religious liberty;

and nine of the 13 original colonies had tax-supported, state churches. At best, nonconformists were tolerated; at worst they were persecuted, including imprisonment or banishment. Baptists had the leading role in bringing about the First Amendment to insure religious freedom for themselves and for all people.

Before its adoption, the Constitution had to be ratified by the states. In the key state of Virginia, James Madison (later our fourth president) and John Leland, a Baptist preacher, were seeking election to the Virginia Committee on Ratifying the Constitution (1788).

Madison's election was doubtful until John Leland agreed to drop out and rally Baptist support for Madison on the condition that Madison would sponsor an amendment for religious freedom. With the backing of Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, and

George Washington, the First Amendment was added to the Constitution.

It was against the background of over a century and a half of religious discrimination and persecution that Baptists led the fight for "separation of church and state, disestablishment of state churches in America, and religious freedom for all people."

People called Baptists were born in persecution, opposing state-sponsored and compulsory infant baptism, tax support for state churches, and demanding the right to assembly for worship, study, teaching, and preaching.

From their earliest traceable history in 17th century England, where the Church of England was the only legally recognized form of religion, Baptists suffered persecution and had to fight for basic freedom.

When people from within the Church of England tried to purify the state church, thus known as "Puritans," King James I (sponsor of the "King James Version of the Bible," 1611) vowed that he would force them to conform or "harry" them out of England. Many of these "dissenters" fled to Amsterdam, some of them becoming Baptists.

From these dissenters came Thomas Helwys who, with less than a dozen others who had become Baptists, returned to England to plant their witness there.

By 1612 these established the first Baptist church on English soil. Along with other nonconformists, they suffered discrimination and persecution. Thomas Helwys was arrested, imprisoned, and died there.

Years later, John Bunyan, a Baptist preacher, was imprisoned because he would not obey church and state orders to stop preaching. It was from Bedford jail that he wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678).

The story was the same in colonial America. One difference was that some of the nonconformists who had fled England for their own religious freedom formed state churches and denied religious freedom to those disagreeing with them!

This included Puritan persecution of Baptists and others in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Baptists stood out in demanding freedom not only for themselves

but for all people, a position championed later by Thomas Jefferson.

In 1638, Roger Williams, a "dissenter," was expelled from Massachusetts because of his disagreement with the Congregationalist State Church. During the winter, he walked over 100 miles into territory of Indians friendly to him. Later, with the major help of John Clarke, a Baptist preacher, Williams succeeded in gaining a charter for a new colony, Rhode Island, the first to be established with religious freedom for all (1663). Roger Williams was a Baptist for a period of time.

Baptists and others suffered religious persecution in Maine. In 1682, William Screven, a Baptist preacher, was arrested and jailed in Kittery, Maine, and given the option of imprisonment or banishment.

Seeking freedom, he led a group of Baptists 1,000 miles down to Charles Town, S.C., where already were Baptists and others who had fled the state/church tyranny in England.

The First Baptist Church of Charleston was formed between 1683 and 1696 (precise date disputed), the first Baptist church in the South. Ironically, persecution in Kittery came from the Puritans, who refused freedom to those differing with them.

Even in Georgia, when yet an English colony and with the Church of England as its state church, Baptists were persecuted.

In 1782, Daniel Marshall, a Baptist preacher, was arrested near Augusta for preaching without a license. Daniel Marshall, his wife Martha Stearns Marshall, and her brother Shubael Stearns were the team of evangelists who started the revival in Sandy Creek, N.C., from which movement Southern

Baptists derive their evangelistic thrust.

An amazing story is that of "the travelling church," which moved from Virginia to the Kentucky Territory to find religious freedom. On June 4, 1768, five Baptist preachers had been jailed in Fredericksburg, Va., for preaching without a license, available only to clergy of the tax-supported Church of England.

On Sept. 29, 1781, between 500 and 600 Baptists left Virginia in wagons and on foot to migrate to the Kentucky Territory, where they established the South Elkhorn Baptist Church on June 4, 1768, near what is now Georgetown, Ky.

We have full freedom to pray, read the Bible, teach, and preach in our churches and in our homes. Anyone can privately pray or read the Bible anywhere and anytime.

No one has thrown God out of our schools. Baptist teachers and students can best give their Christian witness by their character and spirit. We do not need a show of religion through tax-supported public schools; and to encourage such is to betray our Baptist heritage and imperil our hard-won religious freedom.

In keeping with our Baptist genius and heritage, let us resist tax-paid vouchers for private schools, the use of tax-supported schools for formal religion, and any encroachment upon our hard-won principle of the separation of church and state.

Baptists who went to jail for their faith were those who had most to do with putting the First Amendment in the Constitution. Let us not be the ones who weaken it or violate it.

Stagg is former professor at New Orleans and Southern seminaries. The New Testament scholar now lives in Diamond-head.



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ed.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

As a child, I can remember my father always asking me to get him a Coke, or a glass of water, or the newspaper while he was watching television. Now that I am a father, I wonder where is the difference in teaching our children to be servants and just being slaves for lazy adults?

The real heart of this matter is what is the role model we as adults are setting for our children. How do they see us serving their mothers as well as themselves? Is there mutuality in the service? Are we servants or slaves to our children? Servanthood is an attitude of service and submission. Slavery is domination and control.

As fathers, we have an excellent opportunity to serve our children by being attentive to them. Remember the illustration Jesus gave when he washed the disciples' feet. Here is the leader bowing to wash dirty feet. What a strong testimony this sends when we do the forgotten chore or serve our children with gladness when they have groaned and moaned about serving us.

Slavery is the ability to do it for ourselves, but being too lazy. This sends a message that says, "I am more important than you, and your job is to take care of my needs." Mutuality says we are here for each other, and family encourages service to each other.

How can I get my 16-year-old to help out more at home? She just talks on the phone, goes out with her friends, or stays in her room.

When was the last time you spent some time with her? (Isn't that just like a counselor to answer a question with a question?) No, seriously, when a child hits adolescence, the peer group and self become more important than the parents. She is learning to pull away to be her own person. The thing is, she still needs you (but don't tell her). Being observant of her schedules, moods, friends, tastes, and habits allows her to know that you still care.

You may be asking how in the world that will get her to help out. When she sees you caring about her, she may become more focused on you. In this scenario, timing is everything. When she picks up her room or you go out to buy her something, become interested in her world. As she sees you genuinely caring about her and valuing her company, opinions, and thoughts, she obtains the idea that she is a valuable member of your household. She can make contributions. They may not always be up to your expectations, but they will be of her own giving, which is a baby step in the right direction.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name and address not required. Remember: In time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

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Uniform Valuing human life



By Doug Bain
Genesis 1, Matthew 5

Those involved with guiding young people know that their prevailing "logo" may well be "rules are made to be broken" — that is unless they can see the reason for the rules. So — the rule says you must refrain from doing murder. "Yeah — why?" Because the law says so. "But why does it say so?" Because the Bible says so. "But why does it say so? What actually is the problem with doing murder?"

Image and sanctity (Gen. 1:27). The Scripture itself suggests that there is an aspect of human life that is often overlooked: the sanctity of human life. There is a dimension to human life that transcends the merely human level and relates to a more ultimate dimension. Life, as the Hebrew writer portrays it, is a sacred quality that God breathes into an earth form. Some would say that human beings are created in God's image (with something in us that reflects his nature). Others would say that we are created as God's image (as persons we are a reflection of him). Both suggest that there is a capacity about humans that is finely tuned to the divine frequency; we respond to and reflect something of the personal aspect of God, including the aspect that deeply treasures life and person and psyche (self).

Acknowledging such kinship of nature ("image") means not rejecting it and includes a collaborative relationship with God, cooperating with him to enhance life, not destroy life.

Salt and influence (Matt. 5:13-16). A series of truths from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount shows how the Christian who acknowledges the "sanctity of human life" will let such a deep conviction work out into living. As salt permeates, preserves, enhances flavor, so the believer is to get out of the shaker and is to be salt for society. This means the believer has a responsibility to enhance society — to help it be a place worth inhabiting, having the flavor of life. As pork is salted down and seasoned in the smoke house, so the Christian as salt is to target forces in society that make life "rotten." Whatever influences detract from the sanctity of life need Christian "salt." Medically unnecessary abortion and pornography are certainly issues that feed into and feed off moral decay.

Anger (Matt. 5:21-22). The basic rationale behind not killing may well be that whatever tends toward the fragmenting of person or society (ultimately resulting in personal or societal disintegration) is wrong. Jesus indicates that unmeasured anger begins the disruptive and fragmenting process within the angry person and finally in who is the target of that anger. Context suggests that the anger that proceeds without regard for human dignity and sanctity is unhealthy. Healthy anger maintains respect for human dignity and sanctity. Failure concerning this issue has drastic, disruptive, disintegrative consequences.

Sexual purity (Matt. 5:27-28). Sexual activity beyond the confines of responsible marriage commitment violates respect for human dignity (endangering futures and families). Such sexual activity also tends toward the disintegration of personality, character, values, and societal stability, as when one is a third party in someone else's marriage. The character to have discipline about the sexual issue is bound up with the discipline needed in other character issues.

Sexual promiscuity is a major cause of unplanned pregnancies as well as tragically rewritten life scripts. Unplanned pregnancies are the number one reason for abortion, an abomination that tears personal and social fabric limb from limb (as abortion does, literally).

Neighbors and enemies (Matt. 5:43-45a). Since Jesus redefined "neighbor" to include any living being within the sphere of our influence, it becomes imperative to reconsider pre-born people. The present verses grow out of the principle of valuing all of human life; all are "neighbor," calling for efforts to enhance life rather than to target life destructively. As a human reflection (image) of God, the Christian likewise is to regard all human life as possessing sanctity, worth, dignity, and value. Worth derives from the image of God, from his creative effort, and "worth" is to be distinguished from "worthy." Respecting human worth does not obscure the truth of radical human fallenness.

Bain is professor of biblical and related studies, Blue Mountain College.

Bible Book The value of all human life



By Dan Howard
Genesis 1, Matthew 5

It seems that we have lost the sanctity and value of human life in our society. Murder, robbery, euthanasia, voluntary suicides, and abortions are all increasing in our country. All of these are indicators of the erosion of the sanctity of human life. The Scriptures can provide answers for us as we make decisions about the value of life.

All human life comes from God (Gen. 1:27). Man may invent or discover things, but only God can create. God is responsible for all human life. The fact that we are "created in his image" does not refer to our physical appearance. It does refer to the fact that we possess certain qualities like God. The abilities to reason, to think, to make moral choices, and the capacity for fellowship with him and others make us uniquely created in his image.

Society says that our worth or value comes from the kinds of clothes or cars we possess, the way we look, or our level of intelligence. These are not the items upon which our self-worth should be based.

Our worth and value as people should come from the fact that we are created in the image of God. No other part of creation was created in the image of God. God values every human being, even the unborn, above the rest of creation.

Jesus instructs Christians to influence society (Matt. 5:13-16). Salt and light are a part of our everyday lives. We use salt on most foods, and when we flip on the light switch, we expect the darkness to disappear. We have been influenced in our society by salt and light to the point that when we are forced to do without them, we complain. Our world is crying out today for Christians to be the salt and light Jesus called us to be.

Salt acts as a preservative, a healing agent, and a flavoring agent. Light acts to dispel the darkness, to expose evil, and to guide our path. Both salt and light are agents of change. Christ said that his followers are to be the salt and light in this world.

We cannot stop all the evil in the world, just as salt cannot stop all the decay or light dispel all the darkness. We can slow the progress of evil in our world. As we function in our world as salt and light we are to expose the darkness of abortion, pornography, alcohol abuse, child abuse, homosexuality, and moral decay in our world. May we become involved in seeking to influence our world for Christ as we proclaim the value of human life.

Jesus calls us to a new attitude concerning respect for human life (Matt. 5:21-22). The sixth commandment teaches us, "Thou shalt not kill." This commandment affirms the sanctity of all human life. Jesus went beyond the physical act of murder to discuss a person being angry, an attitude leading toward murder. Jesus calls us to a new attitude toward life and that is to respect all life, even the unborn life.

Jesus commands us to live with sexual purity (Matt. 5:27-28). Jesus spoke not only of freedom from the physical aspects of adultery but also the inner thoughts which can result in adultery. In our world there are many things which are deliberately designed to stimulate sexual desires within us. The person Jesus condemns is the one who deliberately uses his eyes to awaken his lust and desire for things which are sinful.

Sexual promiscuity is a major problem today. For many people the answer to an unwanted pregnancy is an abortion. For many people abortion is used as a means of birth control. God has called us to a standard of sexual purity. Abstinence from sexual relations until one is married is the truth taught in the Scriptures.

Jesus demands that we value all human life (Matt. 5:43-45a). Jesus stated that we are to love even our enemies. It is not enough to love those who love us. As Christians we are to love everyone and seek to share the love of Jesus Christ with everyone. We may not agree with a person because of his position on abortion, or his views on other moral issues. We are called to love him and to reflect the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to him. Jesus loves all sinners. Let's pray for our country and leaders to be a people who value all human life, even the unborn.

Howard is pastor of Woodville Church, Woodville.

Life and Work Sanctity of human life



By Billie Buckley
Genesis 1, Matthew 5

The child was moving and swerving, exploding with energy. Sitting quietly on a couch was not her idea of a fun afternoon.

She was reminded by her adult keeper, "We don't kick the couch, Brandy." The swinging and kicking continued. "We don't kick the couch, Brandy."

Never missing a beat, she explained, "But I want to!" Today we echo those same actions and attitudes when we don't respect and value all human life.

"But, I want to highlight me, the creature, and not God, the Creator" (Gen. 1:27). This highlighting does not paint a pretty picture as we insist on shading out our Creator. When we finish this picture there is a startling void on our canvas. Two facts make this true: We were created in his image, and we were created for his fellowship.

God stood at the beginning of time, using his creative power to remove the darkness and fill it with light. Drawn by this light, we were born to reflect his family image.

Great and mighty, reaching out for fellowship, God created male and female to bless and share in his fellowship. This spark of fellowship glows in each of us today as we relate to him and his children.

"But I want to be left alone; don't remind me of respect and responsibility again" (Matt. 5:13-16). Being left alone is a legitimate need today. Many of us would love to spend just one entire day home alone with no one charging and screaming, shoving and shouting at us. Jesus has other plans. He wants us to be preventing and preserving.

Jesus says for us to be in the midst of all the turmoil of our society to prevent rottenness, give flavor, and expose evil. We must come out of the salt shaker freely to do this.

He also wants us to be light. Be a shaft of light, bold and brilliant, exposing the darkness of pornography, abortion, and moral decay.

"But, I want to view abortion as a means of birth control" (Matt. 5: 21-22). This view creates a state of passionate reaction today. There is a need for a way that is calm. Is this possible? With calmness, Christians need to stand in front of this issue using love for a ruler. We need to remind those who differ with us what we believe. We can do this by focusing on the following:

Restoring the right view. In the language of pro-choice versus pro-life, this means Christians are not called on to be pro-choice in any decision-making process. We follow the example of our Lord who prayed in regard to the cross: "Not my choice, but your choice be done."

Responding to alternatives to the open graves for unborn children. These alternatives include open homes, open arms, open love, and open forgiveness. It is plain and simple, too simple not to understand. There are other viable alternatives to abortion.

"But I want to express my sexuality based on my immediate feelings" (Matt. 5:27-28). It is an instant world we live in — instant grits, instant coffee, instant sexual gratification. Expressing our sexuality based on instant desire is out of bounds and destructive for two reasons: violation of respect and promoting of lust.

Respect can be best taught by example. God himself respects us enough to allow us freedom to choose to become violators or keepers of this bruised and battered attitude of respect.

Lust in any area of life insists, "I want this immediate gratification now." Our hospitals, prisons, and shelters are living proof of those who have been drawn by the scent of lust. The cross, still and empty, is our greatest reminder.

"But I want to disregard what God values" (Matt. 5:43-45b). God's values are absolute and unchanging. We never have to second guess him. In the very core of this understanding, clear, resounding, and unmistakable there suddenly comes these familiar words, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only."

Buckley is a member of Petal Harvey Church, Petal.

Another view —

Scholar responds to Criswell's claims of pastor as ruler

By E. Jerry Vardaman

W.A. Criswell recently spoke in Tupelo, as we learned from various news reports (*Baptist Record*, Dec. 30, p. 10).

I respond here briefly to Criswell's highly authoritarian concept of the role of a pastor: "...The man of God who is the pastor of the church is the ruler... three times in Hebrews the Bible says to obey those who have the rule of you. They can quarrel with God over that, not me... the pulpit is mine... the staff is mine and I run that (First) church (of Dallas)."

The passages alluded to in Hebrews by Criswell are apparently Hebrews 13:7: "Remember your rulers, those who spoke the Word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life;" Hebrews 13:17: "Obey your rulers and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls;" and Hebrews 13:24: "Greet all your rulers, and all the saints..." (RSV reads *leaders* in each case where *rulers* is used).

When O.S. Hawkins recently became pastor of First Church, Dallas, he stated very much this same thing as his concept of ministry as well.

It is strange that these kind of pastors insist on freedom for themselves but are not willing to grant academic freedom to seminary professors in their classrooms. But that is beside the point here.

We need to examine more closely the basis of Criswell's opinion that he is a ruler who can do no wrong, and speaks like the popes in an ex-cathedra way.

Each passage in Hebrews speaks of multiple shepherds, reminding us that the views of other shepherds must always be considered as well. No pastor is to think of himself as owning his staff nor squelching the prophetic voice indwelling in their lives. Christian workers, including pastors, have a shared ministry.

Paul's early attitude of one-sided ministry might have turned

Mark off and caused his separation from Mark (Acts 15:38), but when he gained more maturity he learned to value Mark's gifts also (2 Tim. 4:11; Col. 4:10).

The truth does not dwell exclusively in men nor women; it is more assuring to understand the larger New Testament concept that women also exercise prophetic gifts, and we note that Priscilla could even help to correct some of Apollos' erroneous ideas, though Apollos was a preacher (Acts 18:26). Paul apparently profited from insights gained also from Philip's unmarried daughters who served as prophets at Caesarea (Acts 21:9).

When we examine the word translated as "rulers" in the KJV (*egomenoi*) we note that it is derived from *ago*, "to lead" or "to guide." The stress is on leadership based on example, not on authority, as we shall shortly see.

No one person is to be considered a dictator of the church. Our one Master is Christ, and all of us

are brethren, Jesus reminded us.

Criswell, to his credit, changed in his views concerning blacks. He changed in his views of divorce. He changed in his views on suicide. He needs to change in his views on the pastor as dictator of the church as well. Let Jesus instruct him: "... The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader (the same word Hebrew uses) like one who serves..." (Luke 22:25,26).

Let Peter instruct him: "Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory" (1 Pet. 5:3,4).

Let Paul instruct him. Paul constantly referred to himself as a slave (in the Greek, *doulos*) of Jesus. Paul gloried in his weaknesses and infirmities (2 Cor. 11:30), and not in some empty

claim as a "ruler" of the church.

I pray that Criswell is able to listen, and not just to pontificate.

Criswell needs to rethink his views of the Bible as "infallible" as well. The Tupelo paper's article (*Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, Dec. 11) even goes so far as to say that "the infallible Bible is the one foundation" of the Christian's faith.

My Bible tells me that Christ is the one Foundation on which our faith is built. The Bible never points our faith to itself, but is like a finger to point us to Christ. But that is another subject which we only allude to in passing here. I simply point out that a person can believe the Bible is infallible and still go to hell. One who relies on Jesus as Savior and is committed to him as Lord, our Bible tells us, will certainly share eternal life and salvation with Jesus (John 3:16; Matt. 16:18, etc.).

Vardaman is professor of archeology, Mississippi State University.

"True Love Waits" movement thrives at state, national levels

By Sean Keith

The state rally for the "True Love Waits" campaign was held in conjunction with the Youth Evangelism Conference at the Mississippi College coliseum Dec. 27-28, 1993. There were 3,200 in attendance.

Two major goals of this event

were accomplished: that teenagers be challenged with the commitment to remain sexually pure until marriage, and that the media and the public be informed about the campaign on local and state levels.

Between 650 and 700 teens

signed commitment cards representing churches from all over Mississippi; the cards were displayed on the lawn in front of the coliseum.

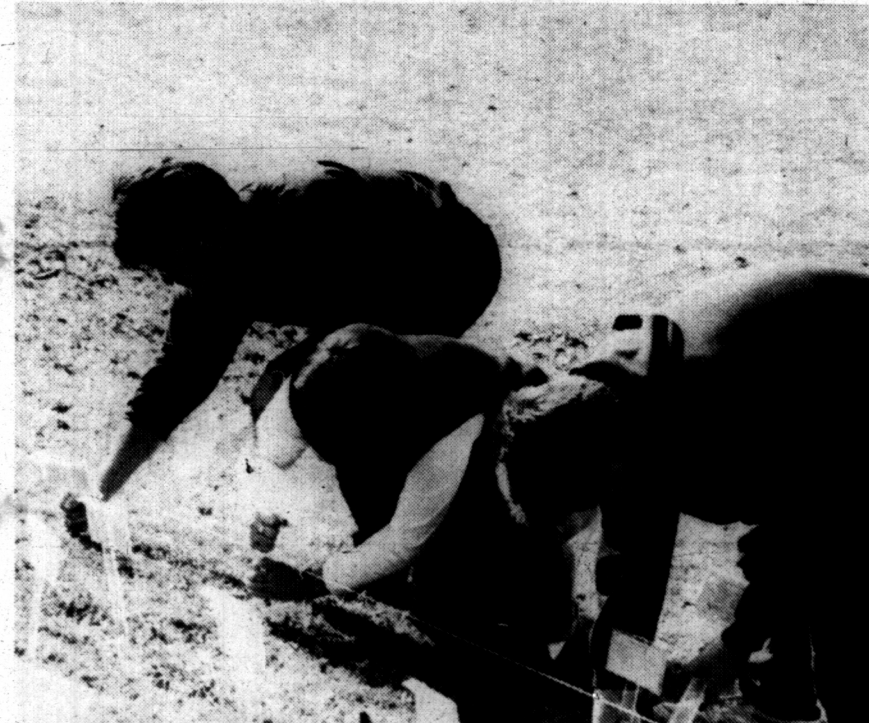
Those same cards, along with others from across the state, will be shipped to Orlando, Fla., for display during the Southern Baptist Convention June 14-16. One hundred thousand such commitment cards, from Southern Baptist teenagers who have made decisions to be sexually pure until marriage, are expected to arrive from all over the U.S.

From Orlando, the cards will be sent to Washington, D.C., and will be displayed in the mall area between the nation's capitol and the Washington Monument on July 29. Five hundred thousand commitment cards, representing not only Southern Baptist churches, but other denominations from all across the U.S. and the world, are expected to be displayed there.

The "True Love Waits" campaign has been a phenomenon because of its appeal to sexual purity in spite of the overwhelming push by society toward a "safe sex" campaign, which primarily promotes condom use.

It is a campaign about the people of God being the demonstration of God's love. The role of the church in this program should be to stand beside teenagers who have made purity commitments, offering them prayer support and encouragement.

Keith is youth consultant with the Sunday School Department, MBCB.



Josh Dear, Tonya Simon, and Justin McKinion, all of Crossgates Church, Brandon, place their purity commitment cards in the lawn display area on the MC campus Dec. 27. (Photos by Sean Keith)



Phil Brown, youth minister at Crossgates Church, Brandon, (bottom-left) talks with attendants to the Youth Evangelism Conference about their "True Love Waits" pledge cards.

Newest in Books

PLAY FAIR, by Danae Dobson. Third book in the Forest Friends series, the story reminds young children that they should always tell the truth. (WordKids!, Word Publishing.)

DOES GOD KNOW HOW TO TIE SHOES? by Nancy White Carlstrom. Picture book ideal for parents to read aloud with young children to encourage a

child's exploration of God. (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.)

ONE-SIDED CHRISTIANITY? UNITING THE CHURCH TO HEAL A LOST AND BROKEN WORLD, by Ronald J. Sider. Encourages readers to find ways to combine evangelism with social concern. (ZondervanPublishingHouse, 256 pages.)

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